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Content

- Messages of the Secretary of the **Climate Change Commission and the Executive Director of the Oscar M. Lopez Center**
- **Foreword**
- Our World Film Review By Maria Eliniesa A. Lucas
- Verdant Film Review By Gelene Mae O. Martin
- Resilience 10 Film Review By Albert Lawrence R. Idia
- Jeremiah at ang Bayan ng Gomorrah Film Review By Ludwig O. Federigan
- 15 Litrato Film Review By Perpi A. Tiongson
- Si Hiraya at ang Diwa Film Review By Mae Anne D. Mangubos
- Tinig Film Review By Kato P. Sarmiento
- **Drawings** Film Review By Marianna L. Vargas
- Liham 23 Film Review By Hajj D. De Jesus
- **Grow My Mind** 25 Film Review By Mac Ericson A. Cinco

Messages



One of the thrusts of the Climate Change Commission is to raise a generation of Filipinos who are well-equipped to advocate, innovate, and dig deep and bite into the task of combating global warming.

In doing this, we value our deep collaboration with our partners because we share the same aim: **We must not only survive but also thrive in a climate change-constrained world.** By partners, we mean all – including the youth – as we endeavour to take on this task through a whole of government and whole of society approaches.

With the world set to have the largest youth population ever in the coming years, we need to start thinking on how to mobilize the talents of our youth and challenge their capacities to make better decisions and influence the government.

Through the Klima Film Festival, our youth is given a fitting venue to discover more of themselves, and echo a powerful message of needing to save our only home.

With this, on behalf of the CCC, I send my warmest thanks to the Oscar M. Lopez Center for being our reliable partner organization in attaining this significant milestone for the youth. May we continue to pursue meaningful collaborations in the future.

From the Climate Change Commission, mabuhay ang kabataang Pilipino!



Thanks to the 18-year old Greta Thunberg, the youth and climate change have become ever more intertwined, and the thought of a global youth movement for climate action is not at all inconceivable. In fact, youth-led organizations around the world are taking action to address the urgency of the climate issue, with thousands of youth strikes held in front of schools, through the halls of government, and at international arenas such as the United Nations assemblies.

With the common vision of developing Filipino youth to actively participate in national efforts to increase awareness and inspire climate action, the Oscar M. Lopez Center is honored to partner with the Climate Change Commission in organizing the first ever Klima Film Festival.

Through films, we harness the paradoxical power of stories to make climate change real and bring it closer to home. In this simple collection of reviews of the top ten films from the Festival, we heighten climate awareness by surfacing the issues that present generations face, through the perspective of the youth.

We thank the CCC for the continued trust and confidence as an ally in climate action; we congratulate the young filmmakers for sharing their talents in the Klima Film Festival; and we proudly present the work of our teams in this collaboration.

Lastly, we invite you, our readers, to take to heart the messages of the youth within these pages and in their films, and take concrete steps to building a more climate resilient Philippines.

DR. RODEL D. LASCO

Executive Director
Oscar M. Lopez Center

Foreword

n a country that is consistently at the top tier of the most vulnerable to climate change, Filipinos have borne the brunt of extreme weather events over the decades, including sea level rise, increased frequency of extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and extreme rainfall, among others.

As climate change poses risks to the environment and to humanity, the Climate Change Commission (CCC) and the Oscar M. Lopez Center (OML Center) deemed it imperative to communicate the importance of climate change adaptation and mitigation, especially to the youth.

Hence, the first-ever Klima Film Festival (KFF) was launched in 2020 to serve as a platform for the youth to spread climate change awareness and action while showcasing their skills, talents, and creativity through writing and producing short films.

After a series of mentoring sessions and film production workshops for the participating teams from across 14 regions of the country, ten (10) films made it to the finals.

The films, screened publicly during the 13th Annual Global Warming and Climate Change Consciousness Week, were assessed by an esteemed panel of judges, including Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda, OML Center Executive Director Dr. Rodel D. Lasco, Commissioner Rachel Herrera, National Artist for Film, Mr. Kidlat Tahimik; Mr. Lavrente Indico 'Lav' Diaz; and Mr. Brillante Mendoza.

This Film Review Booklet was created to take a closer look at each of the climate stories – Our World, Verdant, Resilience, Jeremiah at ang Bayan ng Gomorrah, Litrato, Si Hiraya at ang Diwa, Tinig, Drawings, Liham, and Grow My Mind – to further encourage and involve not only the youth, but people of all ages to advocate for climate action.

SECRETARY EMMANUEL M. DE GUZMAN

Vice Chairperson and Executive Director
Climate Change Commission







Verdant

Film Review By Gelene Mae O. Martin

"Verdant" is a short film that has lots of good things in it.

From pre-production to post-production, the participants took their time preparing this short film. With only a few members, they showed how much one can do, so kudos to Ang Maharlika Productions!

The movie is set in a future Earth, one that is being ravaged by climate change with storms bigger than before and humans the primary cause. The story is narrated through the video logs of brothers Noah and Pete Bolfango, the former an engineer on a quest to find a place on the red planet to fulfill his brother's dream while the latter is the last environmental scientist on Earth. With Pete having a physical condition, he has stayed for what is essentially a suicide mission. Both are fighting for the survival and sustainability of the human race and the film shows how our actions can affect the outcome of the situation.

There are things that I liked about this short film, starting with the technical aspects. The color grading is good as it shows and emphasizes the mood. It shows the gravity of the situation they are in and how they struggle to take action.

Second, the message articulates how every single action we take has a direct impact on our future. The film shows how we can lose to climate change and what sacrifices are needed to ensure that life can continue. The scene where Pete struggles to set up a satellite can be seen as how we might suffer if we do not act today. How they narrate also helps deliver the message about how we are racing against the clock. If we do not hurry up and take action, we could end up like them, forced to leave our home to search for a new one because we didn't start taking care of it when we had time and ruining it during our time.

The message is clear. It shows how time can be one of our worst enemies or best allies against climate change - how our actions can make our future better or worse.

Verdant was chosen as First Runner-Up. It received three major awards: Best Musical Scoring, Best Production Design and Best Cinematography. Mikone Joshua Calungsod was selected as Best Director.

Gelene Mae O. Martin is an Administrative Officer II at the Climate Change Commission.

Resilience

Film Review By Albert Lawrence R. Idia

What happened to the lives of those who had to endure loss and the brunt of the changing climate?

Resilience, one of the ten finalists in the Klima Film Festival, takes a peek into the life of Ethan, a young adult forced to relocate after experiencing one of the worst flooding events in recent history. He goes about his routine, mindful of the sustainable use of resources available to him. He appears optimistic, starting the day with a smile and greeting his neighbor who just stares back. Despite this, Ethan remains unfazed, his smile and energy persevering throughout the day.

Produced by Kris Angel Ditan, Lance Lascano, Louisse Carlo Ledonio, Joshua Oledan, Michaela Bueno, Michael Christopher Villan, Maelanie Ann Requierme, Kenji Yoshida, and Jairus Bredes of South Frame Visuals, Resilience draws its narrative from the experience of communities battered by extreme events, zeroing in on life after a disaster.

First appearing as such a ball of energy, Ethan later becomes shrouded in gloom as his trauma resurfaces when a powerful tropical cyclone batters Metro Manila and nearby provinces, leaving in its wake wiped-out homes, livelihoods, and lives. Memories of the flood that took away his parents re-emerge as he hears accounts of destruction and loss. We now see a beaten Ethan, stripped of his enthusiasm, seemingly dragging himself to go about his daily routine.

Resilience tackles a different kind of disaster, the one that takes place internally - the writhing, unimaginable pain caused by loss. It recalls that extreme events do not only cause damage and loss of livelihood, they can also break families apart and scar lives. Although subtle, it delves into the very real narrative of the displaced, of those who've had to flee their homes, start anew elsewhere, and forge paths towards uncertainty. The film sends a clear message: Yes, the living can carry on, but it doesn't mean they don't get tired.

Ultimately, the path Ethan takes towards the end is a critique on the typical perception of Filipino resiliency, challenging us to go beyond the notion that time and again we will overcome because we're so used to calamities anyway. It is a reminder that, apart from noting the magnitude of a disaster, the number of the dead, the missing, the displaced, and the worth of properties and infrastructures destroyed, we should keep in mind that no one should face the challenges unprepared and then later be forced to carry on and pick up the remaining pieces of their shattered lives.

Resilience is the 2nd Runner-Up.

Albert Lawrence R. Idia is a Communications Specialist at the Oscar M. Lopez Center.









Si Hiraya at ang Diwa

Film Review By Mae Anne D. Mangubos

"Nauubos na ang lakas ko. Hindi ko na kayang protektahan ang lahat. Kailangan mo akong tulungan." — Diwata

(Translated — My power is waning. I could not protect everything. I need your help).

Environmental and climate action are finally getting its well-deserved spotlight in today's time following the series of extreme weather events happening across the globe and in the country. If you are looking for a light, "pasok sa banga" (right on target) film on environmental degradation, "Si Hiraya at ang Diwa" will surely make the cut.

Bannering a youth-centered animation bare of any fancy special effects, the straightforward narration made this film both entertaining and educational, fit for any type of audience. The master creation of the three young women from Southern Tagalog — Erika and Mae Malelang, and Erica Chloe Manalac — "Si Hiraya at ang Diwa" opens an honest window to the very real consequence of environment and climate inaction.

The grappling Diwata, the last standing fairy, embodies our forests today, facing severe threats from deforestation and the unabated cutting of trees to make room for industrial development weakens Diwata. In her desperation to delude several illegal loggers inside her forest, Diwata accidentally misleads the environmentalist Hiraya.

The fairy asked for forgiveness from Hiraya and helped her find her way out of the forest not without

asking for aid to halt the rampant cutting off her trees before it was too late. Unfortunately, the illegal activity continued, and as the last tree was being lopped off, Diwata suddenly vanished into thin air.

While climate change is never explicitly mentioned in the short film, it delves deep and vividly pictured one of its primary contributors — deforestation — and its impact — deteriorating health of the ecosystem. The film sends a strong message that with the unsustainable use of finite resources like forests, and continued business-as-usual activities, there will come a time that the environment can no longer withstand further destruction and will lose its ability to sustain natural processes therein, support the life outside of it, and mitigate climate change.

The six-minute short film rouses a call for all individuals to raise awareness and sound the alarm on the most crucial and challenging issue of our time. It mirrors the urgency we need today to come together and push for the creation of a positive path for battling deforestation and the climate crisis.

"Si Hiraya at ang Diwa," an animation film created by the youth, is also a clear manifestation that the younger generation is demanding all of us — leaders, advocates, businesses and industries, among others — to unite behind a common goal of protecting the lungs of the Earth to ensure that we are shaping their future healthily and sustainably because above all else, there will never be a Planet B for them.

Mae Anne D. Mangubos is an Information Officer II at the Climate Change Commission.



Tinig

Film Review By Kato P. Sarmiento

Directed by Mark Andrew Lim and produced by Prima Lente, "Tinig" is, at its core, a coming-of-age story depicting how an avoidable tragedy set a young man's path toward finding his place and role in society. On a deeper level, it is a story of how a young man's voice finds its way from a place of fear and helplessness to become a beacon of hope, a point of reference, for those unable to find the way out on their own.

Through flashbacks, the film provides a glimpse into the life of a young Makoy living with his parents in their modest seaside home. In a household with many worries, he looked to his father for stability and assurance in caring for his very ill mother, coping with the demands of school and making ends meet. Adapting to a changing climate was not a priority until his parents perished during a strong typhoon. Years later, he becomes a known climate advocate, choosing to use his voice and story to help others avoid the same fate.

While the production was not able to hide its struggles with telling a complex story while filming during a pandemic and meeting competition guidelines, which helps explain the youthfulness of its cast, the film illustrates three powerful images of climate vulnerability.

The first image is how constant exposure to extreme weather can make people minimize the risks that extreme events or slow-onset climate hazards may bring, especially when compared to other more "immediate" issues, such as health and economic concerns. In the film, Makoy's father unwittingly and easily put himself and his family at risk simply by considering the weather report as "just another" typhoon and not preparing for the potential onslaught. Still, we cannot fault him for his lack of foresight, for prioritizing

other concerns. It is a reality that there are people, especially those living in vulnerable areas, who cannot reduce their climate risks.

The second image of climate vulnerability is the struggle the Filipino youth faces in getting their voices and concerns heard. A young Makoy tried to get his worries across to his father several times, only to have his concerns gently downplayed. It did not come across that the father meant to be dismissive but that he was trying to look out for his son and thought that his son need not worry about such issues. While it is true that there is wisdom in experience, there is also merit in seeing the world from fresh perspectives, in having the next generation have a say and be an active part of a family or a community's resilience planning.

The third is of the mental and emotional impacts of climate change and extreme events.

The film's attempt to try and capture the inner turmoil that Makoy goes through — from being an anxious hand-wringing child to finding strength after a tragedy to become an advocate — is commendable. Even the older climate advocate, Makoy, is not depicted as an infallible hero but as a sensitive and convoluted individual who struggles to overcome the ghosts of his past to make way for a better future for himself and others.

What the film lacks in production finesse it makes up for in the interior strength of its main characters and in its brave approach to tackling the complexity of climate vulnerability and action.

Kato P. Sarmiento is the Communications Manager at the Oscar M. Lopez Center.



Liham Film Review By Hajj D. De Jesus

"The best time to act was 20 years ago, the second best time is now."

This is what "Liham" wants us to tell. Time cannot heal our world anymore. As climate change continues to wreak havoc in every part of the world from extreme weather events to sea-level rise, every second, every minute, every hour, every day that passes by without us taking action is not giving our Earth the time to heal. It only makes the situation worse. We are letting the Earth die slowly but surely

"Liham" is a story of a young man who daydreams about his past, where images of nature and proverbs reside. On to the present, he writes a letter as his stand on these proverbs change when the climate he once loved worsens. "Liham" takes us back to when times were much simpler. The slow progress of the film builds this sense of nostalgia where memories from the past can reminisce with a smile. It gives comfort and a warm feeling inside. The simplicity of the visuals made it easy to focus on the monologue. The young man takes us into his memories, vividly describing his past. But as time passes, his beautiful memories fade into the bleakness of the present time. The pain, the frustration and the desperation to escape from the grim experiences portray the same feeling of every one of us who wants to put an end to climate inaction and indifference.

"Liham's" powerful message reminds us that we should stop acting like nothing is wrong. It echoes the importance of collective action and collaboration among sectors to act on the intensifying impacts of climate change, "Liham" portrays the story of every one of us — fighting a good fight for our sustainable future. It reminds us that everything we do today will shape our future.

"Liham" is one of those short films that would not give an impact on the first watch. But, as you dive close into the film and watch it many times, it will leave a deep sense of melancholy and, at the same time, hope that even we are long overdue in our climate action, there's still time to work collectively and leave a legacy not only for this generation but also for the next generations to come.

If you are a fan of deep, thoughtful and nostalgic films about climate change, "Liham" will surely bring you back in time to ignite that fire again to fight the battle of the present reality of climate crisis.

Hajj D. De Jesus is a Creative Art Specialist II at the Climate Change Commission.

Everybody has a story to tell. Let me tell you a story about houseplants.

In this story, you are a Deaf teenage student who longs to have a voice. In the short film titled, "Grow My Mind," houseplants were utilized to decorate fractions of the house. They were just observing the unfolding stories behind people. There are plants in your bed tables — those who see your personal agendas and struggle within the four corners of your bedroom. They hear your desires and your prayers in the morning. They hear your whisper, "Today, I want to do something special."

Then, you will head for breakfast with your parents, however, everything is ordinary. Your relationship with your working dad is still broken — a symbolism of tension with authority.

Your mom is still unbothered while staring at her phone screen and it seems like an everyday stagnant routine — a manifestation of self-silence and ignorance. It is raining outside and it seems like the only thing changing is the weather and while they say that the climate is for long periods, it is regrettably changing. Meanwhile, you still find yourself voiceless — until you don't.

You walk outside to evaluate your life decisions. As one of the billion people, you would question yourself on why do you have to be mute or on why does it have to be you. You are more vulnerable, especially with the changing climate. However, the real question is "how can you outgrow this?" In the current world where the climate is continuously changing and everyone is vulnerable, it is easy to be caught up with our lack of capacity that we tend to not realize that we are our only limit. I saw you helped your mom transfer that houseplant.

The houseplant noticed your effort and it is saying that you can do more. I am certain that your mom noticed it as well and she actually got you a present.

The present is the offering of influence and real action — donate it and pass the good message unto others. Let the people know that we deserve real solutions. Your dad might prevent such solution adaptation with the cost of the gift but he could be moved. Perhaps, he wants to care but the family's financial capacity is limited. Money plays an important role in resolving changes. While they say that money can buy happiness, let climate action be your happiness — buy it!

Your dad wants to hear you so speak up.

Communicate to him that you need him the way that we should communicate to the administration our desire to support climate action. Your voice is not limited to your lips but extends to the calling of your heart toward saving human lives. If only everyone is willing to listen and ready to speak up, we can help prevent climate change altogether.

The houseplants are watching. Make them proud. After all, if there's a common connection between you and the houseplants, it will be your ability to grow. Water your plants the way you water your care for the planet. Know that you could do something and you are capable of action. So, how can we prevent global warming? Speak up! Bring your battle and your voice outside your comfort zone. Plant hope and choose change, not climate change. Always remember that every effort matters.

This is only a single story of hope. I am sure that we have more stories to hear and more voices to reveal. This is not the weather to be silent. This is the weather to speak up to act on climate change.

Mac Ericson A. Cinco is an Information Officer I at the Climate Change Commission.

Grow My Mind Film Review By Mac Ericson A. Cinco



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