**FDCP confident young generation will enjoy silent films**

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MANILA, Philippines — Film and Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) chair Liza Diño expressed confidence that millennials and Gen Z’s will be interested in watching silent films despite their preference for movies with high-quality sound.

“I actually think that the format of the International Silent Film Festival is so genius and so unique that it will be able to bring the young audiences to watch silent films,” said Liza. “(Like) in the previous editions of the international silent filmfests, what happened was that a (participating) country chose a silent film (of their work) and then they also chose a Filipino band or musicians who complemented and played live during the conduct of the silent film festival. That brought so many young audiences because they also looked forward to watching their favorite band.”

Rivermaya, Liza shared, was among the previous performers apart from a number of Filipino world-class musicians. “We have rondalla. I think that’s what makes the international silent film festival so unique and something to watch out for every single year.”

Liza recalled that Jose Nepomuceno was hailed as the Father of Philippine Cinema because he was the one who started it all. As a formidable figure of the Philippine silent cinema era, he produced and directed Dalagang Bukid starring Atang dela Rama and Marceliano Ilagan.

In honor of Nepomuceno, a new silent short film competition will be held through the 15th International Silent Film Festival Manila (ISFFM), a joint partnership among FDCP, Embassy of France in Manila, Philippine Italian Association, Goethe-Institut Philippinen, Instituto Cervantes de Manila and Japan Foundation Manila.

Established in 2007, the ISFFM is among the few remaining silent film festivals in the world, and the first and oldest Southeast Asian silent filmfest. It is an awaited cultural event among cinephiles and music lovers as it brings together film classics and Filipino musicians on the same stage to perform and reinterpret stories.



ISFFM has stepped up efforts to promote silent filmmaking in the Philippines by establishing the 2021 Mit Out Sound (MOS): International Silent Film Lab, the country’s first film lab on silent filmmaking. It aims to encourage the production of silent films and discover new talents. It offers training sessions on visual storytelling, safe filming, and editing by local and international mentors.

The ISFFM committee will choose 10 filmmakers to undergo the intensive MOS film lab. The FDCP, through its Film Cultural Exchange (FCEP), will conduct all MOS activities via Zoom.

The 10 selected participants will receive a P50,000-production grant to produce their films. These silent short films will premiere at the 15th ISFFM Silent Short Film Competition in November. During the festival’s culmination, incentive awards will be given. They are Best Film Award (P20,000), Jury’s Special Prize Award (P10,000), and the Jose Nepomuceno Award (P15,000).

Since the production of silent films only appeals to a few filmmakers, the ISFFM has issued a nationwide call for entries by amateur and professional filmmakers, 16 years old and above.

Liza hopes that our filmmakers can rediscover the silent film genre and create reimagined portrayals of our cinematic past through the event.

Asked if there will be a live audience in the silent film festival, Liza said that it is the plan as the festival opening is set to be held at the newly-restored Metropolitan Theater.



Film Development Council of the Philippines chair Liza Diño hopes our fi lmmakers can rediscover the silent fi lm genre and create reimagined portrayals of our cinematic past through the 15th International Silent Film Festival Manila.