

LEARNING RESOURCE

SPA - MEDIA ARTS



FILM & CINEMA

INTRODUCTION TO FILM

QUARTER 1 - MODULE 1

LEARNING RESOURCE for MEDIA ARTS
FILM AND CINEMA
INTRODUCTION TO FILM

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FOREWORD

Welcome to this Learning Resource for Media Arts

This Learning Resource was developed by experts from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts as a reference to aid you in developing rich, meaningful, and empowering learning in the creative fields. Every effort has been exerted to produce a Self-Learning Learning Resource that incorporates the most fundamental elements and principles of each discipline, while providing a spiraled, scaffolded, and multi-sensory approach to allow you to explore your innate creativity while building discipline and rigor in your chosen discipline.

Each lecture, activity, or reflection here is designed to be meaningful. Each one designed to build from the previous one, and each one with the objective of building up for the next skill or competence. We hope that you will find these activities challenging but empowering, and that your potential as a Filipino artist and Creative is further enhanced and inspired.

These Learning Resources take into consideration the various limitations and challenges brought about by the current situation, and provides you with the flexibility to manage content and pace to your individual needs while maintaining standards for creativity, embodying 21st Century skills, and aspiring towards artistic excellence. Beyond compilations of dry information, these Learning Resources seek to develop Higher Order Thinking Skills of Analysis, Evaluation, and Creation.

If you are planning to use this Resource as a facilitator or teacher, you are expected to guide and orient your learners in the proper and efficient use of this Learning Resource. Most, if not all activities, will entail exploration, investigation, and experimentation, as such it is imperative that you, as the facilitator, establish the guidelines which will allow your students to be creative but within responsible, safe, and academically-sound limits. Your guidance and mentorship is expected and encouraged throughout the learning process.

We look forward to your journey as an artist, MABUHAY!

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES



0-1 Filmmakers shooting during the quarantine. Photos from [yahoo.com](https://www.yahoo.com), create.pro, and Lauren De Cicca

The contribution of media arts to people's wellbeing becomes more apparent and significant to our lives now, more than ever. One proof of this is the fact that we still take comfort in watching films to entertain us while we are locked in at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some filmmakers have even continued with their creative process by making films at the comfort of their own homes. Films made during this period can attest that even the pandemic could not hinder one's creativity. Artists have proven that they can thrive during the most uncertain times.

As a flexible medium, film provides people the opportunity to still be creative amid the quarantine. Filmmakers can push on with their artistic ventures and find inspiration, even in the most unexpected ways. There may be more important needs for many of us but simple joys, even in these trying times, come through the arts and our collective expression.

In the succeeding lessons, you will learn more about films, cinema, and its early history, not only in the Philippines but around the world. At the end of the module, you should be able to:

1. Identify key figures in Philippine cinema and their significant works or contributions
2. Outline the history of global and local cinema
3. Analyze mainstream and independent Filipino films
4. Compile significant works and masterpieces in Philippine cinema and broadcast arts

5. Identifies cinematic technique using cinematic language
6. Evaluate film as art and form of entertainment

This Learning Resource may be used for, and is applicable to, the following DepEd Codes:

1. SPA_MA-FA10-Ia-b-1
2. SPA_MA-FA10-Ic-d-2
3. SPA_MA-FA10-Ie-f-3
4. SPA_MA-FA10-Ig-h-4
5. SPA_MA-FA10-Ii-j-5
6. SPA_MA-FA10-Ii-j-6

CONTENT AND ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

In a journal, notebook, or blog entry, reflect on the following:

1. What is cinema?
2. How do films create the illusion of movement?
3. How did cinema start in the Philippines?
4. What is the difference between mainstream and independent films?
5. What differentiates film from other art forms?
6. What is a shot?
7. Why do we need to study and analyze films?

Originally, the word “film” is used to refer to the photographic material where visual images and sound are inscribed. The medium where these photographic images are shown is called a movie screen, or cinema in general.

Nowadays, due to the advent of digital technology, film generally refers to the visual art form which recreates

experiences to communicate ideas, stories, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or atmosphere, through moving images, along with sound and other sensory stimulations. A film is also called a movie, which is a shortened version of “moving images” or “moving pictures” (motion picture).

As an art form, film reflects the culture and beliefs of the people it caters to. In most times, it is the one which even shapes our consciousness. Aside from being an art form, film is also considered a means of communication.

Cinema, on the other hand, is also used to refer to filmmaking or film production, the film industry, or the art form itself. Filmmaking or film production is the process of creating films, generally for those intended for extensive theatrical exhibition.

The word “cinema” came from the French term “Cinématographe,” which is a camera



0-2 Lumiere Cinematographe. Photo by Victor Grigas

and projector at the same time. The popular Filipino word for this is “sine,” which came from the first two syllables of both the English and French terms.

Derived from this is the word “cinematography,” the illusion of movement created by the recording and subsequent rapid projection of many still photographic pictures on a screen. How do films create this illusion? While watching a film, what we are seeing is a rapid succession of at least 24 still photographs or frames per second. This is brought about by the optical illusion of motion pictures.

If our eyes see many individual, but related, images of a moving object in rapid succession, the brain will connect these pieces together to make a single, fluid sequence out of them. We also combine images to form a mental whole, as created by a series of stills. We believe that what we see is an apparent movement between images rather than a series of consecutive but still photos.

Initially a product of scientific endeavor, cinema has become a medium of mass entertainment and communication, and today it is an extremely huge industry. However, cinema is much more than the fiction films we are most familiar with. It also includes documentaries and nonfiction films, art films, broadcast and digital media, and animation.

ACTIVITY 1: PERSISTENCE OF MOTION

On a corner of a page of any notebook, draw a stick figure that is performing a simple action such as walking. Draw slightly different stick figures on a similar corner of other pages of the notebook, each time making the arms or legs move a small amount. When you have around 20-25 drawings, start flipping the pages of your notebook from back to front. What did you notice? Why is this so?

Films have ranged from silent movies to talkies or talking films, from black and white to color. At present, film is considered the most popular of all the art forms. Why is it such? Let us trace the development of cinema throughout the years to get to know more about the nature of films.



LESSON 1 EARLY YEARS OF PHILIPPINE CINEMA



0-3 A streetcar running along Escolta Street during the American period (1900s) by unknown author

In the Philippines, film started as a technology brought about by Western colonizers. Considered more of a medium for aesthetics, a tool for entertainment and a business, rather than a technological discovery, film's development in our country is rooted in stage plays.

In 1896, a certain Spaniard named Señor Pertierra prepared a program to launch his first movie show at Christmas Time in Manila at Salon de Pertierra, which he earlier established as the Phonograph Parlor. However, the show was postponed several times until finally, in 1897, it turned out to be a mere presentation of stills and photographs.

On the same year, Swiss businessmen Liebman and Peritz introduced to the country the Lumière Cinématographe, a device created by French brothers August and Louis Lumière. Through the Cinématographe, which was a camera, film printer, and projector

all in one, the Lumière brothers were considered the first to present projected moving pictures to a paying audience in 1895 in Paris, France.

In 1898, Antonio Ramos, a Spanish Army officer from Alhama de Aragon, was able to import a Lumière Cinématographe from Paris along with 30 film titles using his savings and the financial backing of Liebman and Peritz. He was also able to produce films "*Panorama de Manila*" (Manila Landscape), "*Fiesta de Quiapo*" (Quiapo Fiesta), "*Puente de España*" (Bridge of Spain), and "*Esceñas Callejeras*" (Street Scenes) using the same camera, making him the first motion picture producer in the Philippines.



0-4 Jose Nepomuceno's "*Dalagang Bukid*"

The first Filipino-owned movie theater was set up by painter Jose Jimenez in 1903. During the American occupation, as film slowly gained popularity, Filipinos started to find silent films and newsreels as a new mode of entertainment. They trooped to movie theaters to see them.

In 1912, American theater owner Harry Brown and scriptwriter Edward Meyer Gross worked on the first locally produced full-length film in the Philippines, "*La Vida de Jose Rizal*," which (1919) movie poster. Image from esquiremag.ph was about the life of our national hero Dr. Jose Rizal. It was about an hour long.

However, competing with Brown and Gross was another American theater owner and film studio manager Albert Yearsley. He came up with his own version of Rizal's life through a short film, which finished ahead of the other Rizal film. It was shorter with a running time of 20 minutes only.

In 1917, photographer José Nepomuceno and his brother Jesus established Malayan Movies. Considered the "Father of Philippine Cinema," Nepomuceno saw cinema not only as a profitable venture, but also as a promising medium which could record the development of the country.

Nepomuceno produced the first Filipino full-length film "*Dalagang Bukid*" in 1919. The silent film was based on Hermogenes Ilagan's popular zarzuela or musical play. Angelita (Atang de la Rama), a young flower vendor, was forced by her parents to marry Don Silvestre, a widower and a loan shark, despite her love for Cipriano, her childhood sweetheart and a poor law student. The wealthy old man used his riches and took advantage of the financial problems of Angelita's family to try to win her. Issues such as gambling, colonial mentality and other negative values were highlighted through the story.

After "*Dalagang Bukid*," Philippine literature and popular theater became the main sources of storyline and characterization for Filipino films. Nepomuceno registered another first under his name when he premiered "*Punyal na Ginto*" (Golden Dagger) on March 9, 1933 at the Lyric Theater. It was considered the first locally made "talkie" or film with sound.

Sadly, as the materials used at the time were very fragile, none of Nepomuceno's early works survived the war. However, it was clear that there was a change in the usual entertainment fare from *komedya* or *moro-moro*, *zarzuela* and *bodabil*. More and more Filipinos started making their own films.

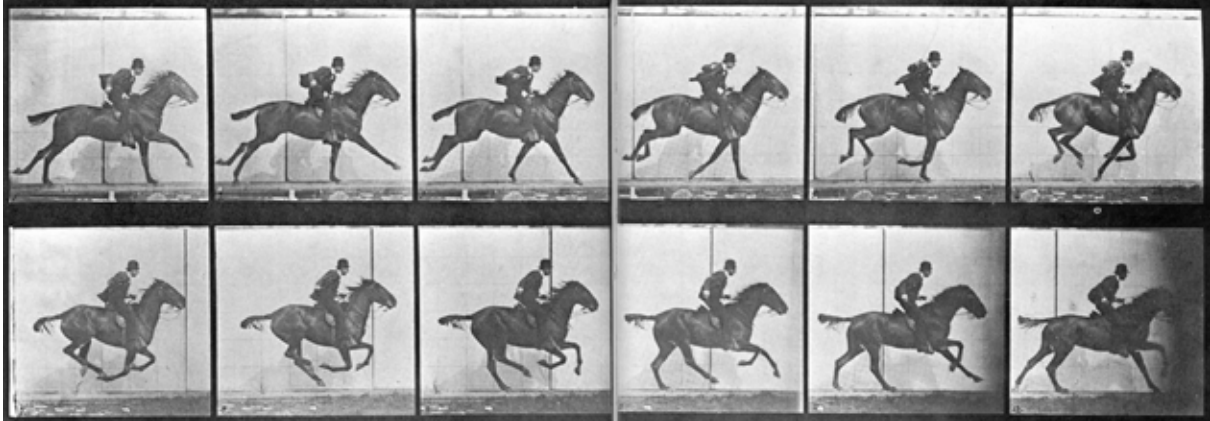
ACTIVITY 2: EARLY PHILIPPINE CINEMA

1. Watch the first half of the documentary on the History of Philippine Cinema by the late film critic and historian Agustin "Hammy" Sotto. It is available online for free at <https://vimeo.com/358981210> via the Vimeo account of director Mike de Leon.
2. In a journal, notebook, or blog entry, reflect on the following:
 - a. Why were there no significant developments in the history of Philippine cinema between the time when American filmmakers competed in producing the two films on Dr. Jose Rizal and the year when José Nepomuceno produced the first Filipino full-length film "*Dalagang Bukid*?"
 - b. Who were the other prominent figures during the "silent era"?
 - c. What brought about sound in Filipino films?
 - d. What were the major changes in storytelling in Filipino films since then?

Before we move on to the rest of the history Philippine cinema, let us get to know about world cinema. How did Philippine cinema compare to the pioneers of world cinema during the early years?



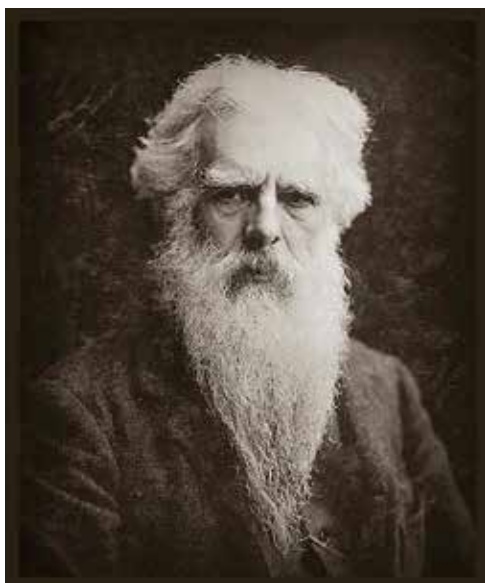
LESSON 2 EARLY HISTORY OF CINEMA



0-5 *The Horse in Motion* by Eadweard Muybridge

The 19th century saw a vast proliferation of visual forms of popular culture. The industrial era offered ways of easily duplicating large numbers of lantern slides, books of photographs, and cheap illustrated fiction.

The middle and working classes of many countries could visit museums, circuses, “freak” shows, amusement parks, music halls, and other forms of inexpensive entertainment. The rich could watch dramatic groups performing in theaters and opera houses.



0-6 Eadweard Muybridge. Photo from *Animals in Motion* by Author

Bringing entire theater productions from town to town, however, was expensive. Similarly, many people had to travel long distances to visit museums or amusement parks. Before people could travel via airplane, only a few could hope to see for themselves the exotic lands they saw in books of travel photographs.

The film industry originated in the early 19th century through the creation of photography, the discovery of the illusion of motion by combining individual still images, and the study of human and animal

locomotion. Offering a cheaper way of providing visual sorts of entertainment to the masses, films would later become a popular visual art form. The history of cinema is complex, and others have been left out in this module.

What is presented here, though, is the culmination of these technological developments, which starts when the idea of the motion picture as an entertainment industry first emerged. The industry has gone through extraordinary changes since then, some driven by the artistic visions of individual artists, some by commercial needs, and still others by chance.

It is difficult to attribute the invention of cinema to a single source. No person alone is credited for inventing cinema.

Rather, the motion picture technology came about through an accumulation of contributions from different countries.

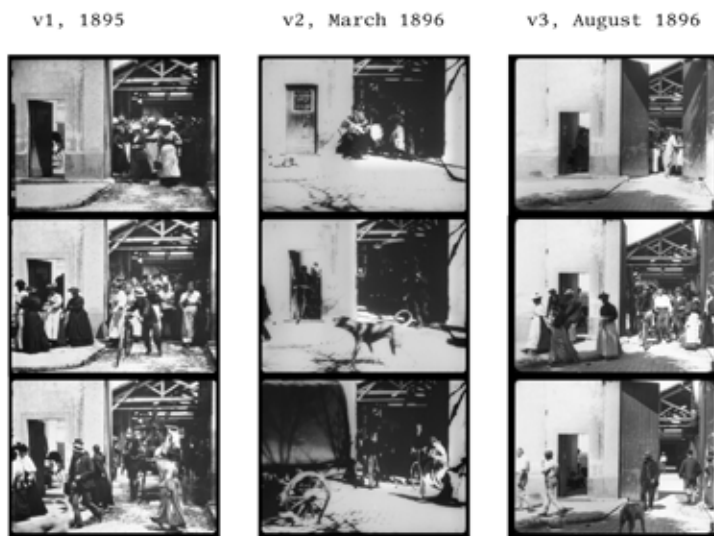
As what you have discovered after doing the first activity in this module, there could be no motion picture without pictures. The first person to break a continuous action into separate pictures was Eadward Muybridge, particularly through photographs of a galloping horse.

In 1872, Muybridge was hired by California governor Leland Stanford to help him prove that all four hooves of a racehorse left the ground at some point in its stride. At stake was a bet of 25,000 dollars which Stanford, an avid horse breeder and racer, placed against a friend's claim.

After five years, when faster exposures became possible, Muybridge set up 24 cameras in a row along the racetrack. True enough, by setting up wires and strings attached to each camera shutter, he was able to prove Stanford's claim and helped him win the bet.



0-7 Kinetoscope with Phonograph cylinder audio player built in and earphones, 1895. Photo from [victorian cinema.net](http://victoriancinema.net)



0-8 A collage that compares film stills from 3 different versions of the seminal movie *"La Sortie de l'usine Lumière à Lyon"*, a short film by Auguste and Louis Lumière

In 1891, William Kennedy Laurie (also known as W.K.L. Dickson), an employee at the Edison Manufacturing Co. (later known as Thomas A. Edison, Inc.), successfully developed what was widely regarded as the first motion picture camera, the Kinetograph.

Dickson, who was working in the company's laboratories in New Jersey, also demonstrated a prototype of

the peep-hole motion picture viewer Kinetoscope, which enabled one person at a time to view moving pictures. Edison coined "Kinetoscope" from the Greek word for a watcher of movements.

The Kinetoscope, a device that would become the precursor to the motion picture projector, consisted of a cabinet with a window through which individual viewers could experience the illusion of a moving image. By looking through an eyepiece at the top of the machine at the film gate, the viewer was able to watch a film, initially about 20 seconds in length, which ran through the mechanism in a continuous loop. It was considered the first device to show moving pictures.

Come to think of it. While the experience of watching films on our cellphones and other small gadgets may seem very different from the shared nature of film viewing that we have experienced in cinemas, the small-format, single-viewer screening is a return to its early roots in some ways.



0-9 Auguste Lumière and Louis Lumière



0-10 The Jazz Singer (1927) movie poster

Edison's company not only built the machine, but also produced films, more appropriately known as "actualities," of famous people, news events, disasters, people at work, new modes of travel and technology, scenic views, expositions, and other leisure activities, for public consumption. The company's production shifted to comedies and dramas when actualities declined in popularity.

The company also began installing Kinetoscope machines in hotel lobbies, amusement parks, and arcades. In 1894, Kinetoscope parlors opened in New York, London and Paris as the coin-operated machine was licensed in different parts of the world. The introduction of the

Kinetoscope in Europe led to the creation of the Cinématographe by French brothers August and Louis Lumière, who were photographic plates manufacturers in Lyon.

Through the Cinématographe, which was a camera, film printer, and projector all in one, the Lumière brothers became the first to present projected moving pictures to a paying audience on December 28, 1895 at the basement lounge of the Grand Café in Paris, France. In those days, cafes were gathering spots where people sipped coffee, read newspapers and were entertained by singers and other performers. That night, it was different.

The Lumières held a screening of a sequence of about ten short scenes, including their first film "Workers Leaving the Factory," a segment lasting less than a minute and showing workers leaving the family's photographic instrument factory at the end of the day. Fashionable patrons paid a franc to see a 25-minute program.

Since the Cinématographe was smaller than Edison's Kinetograph and lightweight enough for easy outdoor filming, the Lumière brothers were able to shoot films anywhere.



0-11 Georges Melies, one of early cinema's greatest innovators; and the iconic "moon shot" image from his film A Trip to the Moon. photos from wikimedia (CC0)

They used the

camera to create short films, most of which depicted scenes from everyday life. They established agencies and sent representatives all over the world to sell their invention in many countries.

By 1897, the invention of the cinema was largely completed. There were two principal means of exhibition: peepshow devices for individual viewers and projection systems for audiences. Typically, projectors used 35mm film with sprocket holes of similar shape and placement, so films could be shown on different brands of projector.

The first films were all silent and black and white. Silent films were generally simplistic in nature, acted in overly exaggerated movements to engage the eye, and accompanied by live music, played by musicians in the theater, and written titles to create a mood and to narrate a story.

Several filmmakers later emerged to transform the silent film into an art and to unlock its potential as a medium of serious expression and persuasion. Georges Méliès, one of those who was able to watch the films of the Lumière brothers, became the first to make fictional narrative films by combining illusion, comic skit, and pantomime.

Méliès, a French magician and theater manager-director, saw the possibility of telling stories through films so he acquired a camera, built a studio, wrote scripts, designed sets, and used actors to shoot films with stories. He employed basic camera tricks such as stop motion, slow motion, dissolve, fade, superimposition, jump cut and double exposure in hundreds of films he made from 1899 to 1912.

In 1902, he came up with “Le Voyage dans la lune” (A Trip to the Moon), considered the first science fiction film and one of the most influential works in the history of cinema. Sadly, he was forced out of business by the commercial growth of the film industry and he died a poor man in 1938.

Synchronized sound was initially added to films using phonographic cylinders or discs. The first full-length film to successfully incorporate synchronized dialogue was “The Jazz Singer.” It used the Vitaphone system, which employed a separate record disc with each reel of film for the sound. The release of “The Jazz Singer” in the US in 1927 marked the birth of the talkies, and by 1930 silent film was a thing of the past.

The sound-on-disc system, which was used by Warner Brothers, proved unreliable and was then replaced by an optical, variable density soundtrack which was recorded photographically along the edge of the film. This would not only establish Warner Brothers as a major Hollywood presence but also change the industry forever.

In 1922, the Technicolor company produced a full-length film, “The Toll of the Sea,” in two primary colors using a dye-transfer technique. Ten years later, Technicolor had designed a three-color system with more realistic results. All color films were produced with this improved system for the next 25 years.

ACTIVITY 3: THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM INDUSTRY

1. Watch the first film “Workers Leaving the Factory” (1895) by the Lumière brothers via YouTube: <https://youtu.be/DEQelRLxaM4>
2. Now, watch the film “A Trip to the Moon” (1902) by Georges Méliès, also via YouTube: <https://youtu.be/xLVChRVfZ74>
3. In a journal, notebook, or blog, reflect on the following:
 - a. What are the major differences between the two short films? What are their similarities?
 - b. Which of these two films put more emphasis on form?
 - c. Which focused more on content? Justify your answer.

Now that we have learned about the development of cinema in the world stage from silent to talking films, and from black and white to color, let us continue with our study of Philippine cinema.



LESSON 3

THE GOLDEN AGES OF PHILIPPINE CINEMA



0-12 Gloria Romero and Susan Roces in Sampaguita Pictures' *"Anong Ganda Mo"*.
Photo from *Philippines Tatler*.

Contrary to popular notion, Filipino films are not new to the global festival scene. In 1937, *Zamboanga*, starring Fernando Poe (father of Fernando Poe Jr.) and Rosa del Rosario, became the first Filipino film to gain international recognition. During the 1940s, the Filipino audience embraced Philippine cinema's focus on war and heroism. In 1946, a year after the second World War ended, the country became a republic.

At first, Hollywood studios dominated the market. However, the Big Four production companies – Sampaguita Pictures, LVN Pictures, Premiere Productions and Lebran International – soon rose to prominence, with each studio specializing in different genres.



0-13 Manuel Conde's *Genghis Khan* (1950). Photo from artsandculture.google.com

The local industry averaged about 350 films per year, making the Philippines second to Japan in terms of number of film productions per year in Asia. Film productions also became one of the major industries of the country, contributing huge revenues to the national government.

Major Philippine studios also produced a lot of artistic and notable films, some of which became internationally acclaimed, in the early 1950s. One of the most notable among these was National Artist for Film Manuel Conde's "*Genghis Khan*," the first Asian film to be screened at the Venice Film Festival.

The film revolves around the story of a young Mongol prince named Temujin (with writer and director Conde also playing the lead role), who participates in a series of challenges against rival tribes for land rights.

With the support of Burchou (Lou Salvador) and his beautiful daughter, Lei Hai (Elvira Reyes), Temujin uses his wits to emerge victorious against bigger and tougher opponents. However, unknown to any of the participants, Burchou's advisor had other plans in mind.

The film was later shown in Paris in 1954, with a copy dubbed in French. It was so successful that Hollywood came up with its own version starring John Wayne as Genghis Khan.

The period from 1950s to 1960s also saw Lamberto Avellana and Gerardo De Leon, two other National Artists for Film, contributing to make the country one of the leaders in filmmaking during that time. Avellana gained international recognition for "*Anak Dalita*" and "*Badjao*," while De Leon also produced several film classics such as "*Daigdig ng Mga Api*," "*Noli Me Tangere*," "*El Filibusterismo*," "*Sisa*," "*Sawa sa Lumang Simboryo*," "*Sanda Wong*," "*The Moises Padilla Story*," and "*Banaue*."

While there were accomplished directors and producers, the studio system was also the age of Filipino film stars. The growth of film production also gave birth to the careers of Rosa Del Rosario, Carmen Rosales, Mila Del Sol among the females, and Rogelio Dela Rosa, Angel Esmeralda, and Rudy Concepcion among the males.

The Big Four eventually closed one after the other during the 1960s as independent film production companies replaced the monopolized studio system. New and different film genres such as Westerns, musicals, action, and “bomba” or soft porn were introduced to the local audience to explore.

Propaganda films proliferated in the early 1970s when the Marcos administration tried to maintain power and extend their control by imposing Martial Law. The Board of Censors for Motion Pictures was also created to regulate films and ban those that were critical of the government.

From mid-1970s to the 80s, two other National Artists for Film, Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal, won acclaim in top international film festivals. The two filmmakers were characterized by their non-conformist and independent styles – whether they were shooting outside the studio system or not.



0-14 National Artist for Film Lino Brocka

Amid the restrictions imposed during Martial Law, more noteworthy films like “Insiang,” “Jaguar,” “Maynila, Sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag,” and “Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang” by Brocka, “Nunal sa Tubig,” “Himala,” and “Manila By Night” (City After Dark) by Bernal, “Burlesk Queen” by Celso Ad. Castillo, and “Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos” by Mario O’Hara flourished to keep Philippine cinema alive.

The following decade, though, saw local film outfits opting to produce low quality, formulaic and hastily made films to keep production costs less and with the hope of countering the effects of censorship, high taxes, and piracy. The industry still managed to thrive with about 200 films a year.



0-15 National Artist for Film Ishmael Bernal, photo from everythingfineph.com

Towards the end of the 1990s and early 2000s local releases started to dwindle down to 50 per year as Hollywood took over a big chunk of the Filipino film market.

Fortunately, the rise of the digital age in filmmaking quickly made its way into the business, making it easier for independent filmmakers to produce films. Slowly but

steadily, the local industry found its new footing in the digital age of filmmaking which paved the way to the proliferation of critically acclaimed films that caught the eyes of prestigious film festivals both local and abroad.

Digital films have become more popular after the video technology has improved not only in their production but also in the way they are projected in cinemas. Although a huge percentage of digital films are produced by independent and aspiring filmmakers, established studios have also used the technology to shoot their films.

Lav Diaz, Brillante Mendoza and National Artist for Film Kidlat Tahimik have been among the Filipino filmmakers currently leading the charge of the independent films in the international scene despite them not having a sustained run in local cinemas.

Diaz's recent streak of victories – from the Golden Lion for “Ang Babaeng Humayo” at the 76th Venice Film Festival to the Silver Bear Alfred Baur Prize for “Hele Sa Hiwagang Hapis” at the Berlin International Film Festival – coupled with the accomplishments of the other two directors, have cemented Philippine cinema's place in the world map of filmmaking.



0-16 Filmmaker Lav Diaz, photo by Jason Quiblain

ACTIVITY 4: PHILIPPINE CINEMA THROUGH THE AGES

1. Watch the second half of the documentary on the History of Philippine Cinema by the late film critic and historian Agustin “Hammy” Sotto. It is available online for free at <https://vimeo.com/358981210> via the Vimeo account of director Mike de Leon.
2. In a journal, notebook, or blog, reflect on the following:
 - a. What were the marked changes in the way film directors and actors work in the film industry before and after the war?
 - b. Who were the other prominent personalities who contributed to the development of Philippine cinema during that era?
 - c. What Filipino films from the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, and 90s make headlines in international film festivals? Why? What did critics say about these films?

After learning about the key figures in Philippine cinema and their important works and contributions, and having an outline of the significant events which transpired in the history of global and local cinema, we are now ready to analyze mainstream and independent Filipino films. What are their major differences? What are their main similarities? Is there a need to classify films as such?



LESSON 4

MAINSTREAM AND INDEPENDENT FILMS



0-2 Agta community gathers in the barangay captains house (the community leaders home – a non Agta Filipino) at night to watch the only TV in the village. Photo by Jacob Maentz

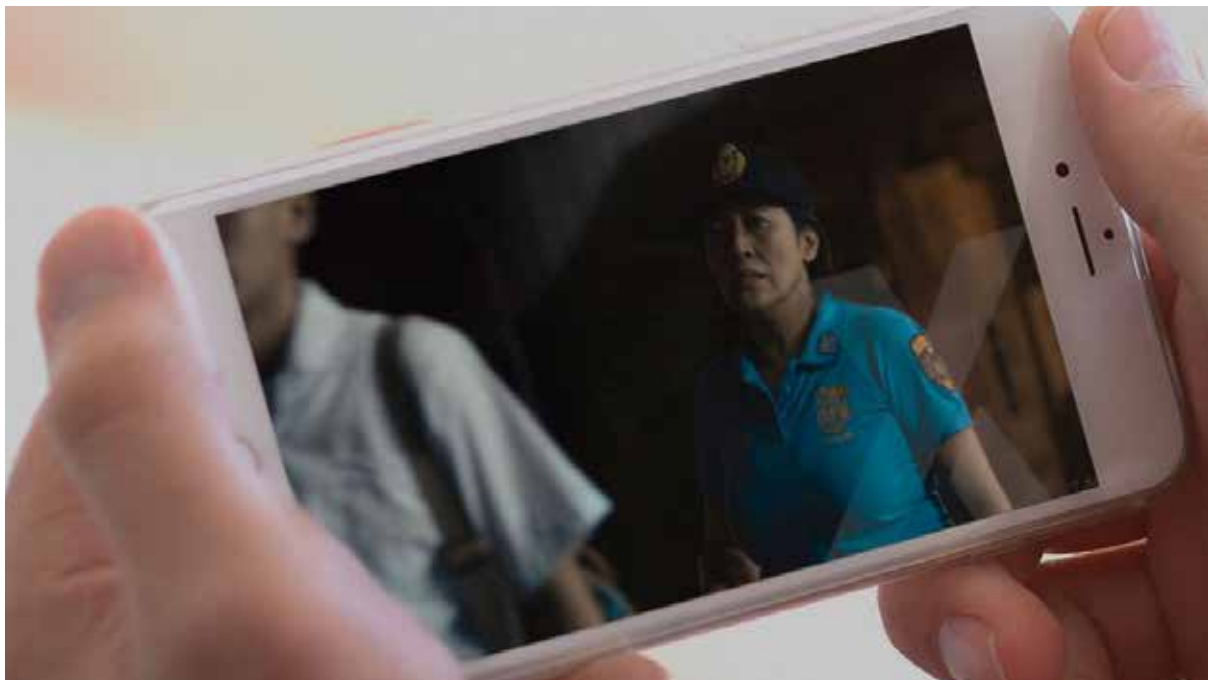
Commercial films, which are made for people to watch for a fee, are the most prevalent in the film industry. Mainly narrative in nature, or has a story to tell, they are made through an established system and are often called mainstream cinema. The producers or financiers put in a great amount of money to make a film with the aim of getting back a huge return on their investment.

Independent films or “indies” are so called because they are supposedly free from the control of established studios. They can be full-length or short films which express their creativity in a different manner. Some of these films, despite their low budgets, have made waves and gained recognitions in local and international film festivals and award-giving bodies.

Due to relatively higher taxes as compared to other film industries around the world, lack of government support, censorship, competition from other entertainment media and big budgeted foreign films, movie companies have been pressured to cater to the taste of the viewers composed mainly of a mass audience. Films need to focus on what the majority wants to earn profits.

While commercial factors largely pushed forward the development of narrative film, we should also acknowledge the significant role individual artists played in turning cinema it into a medium of personal expression.

The Philippine film industry is not only limited to mainstream cinema and it is continuously evolving. More and more brave and talented filmmakers, armed with a diverse set of outputs on varied subjects and stories, are pushing the boundaries despite the challenges and problems that beset them.



0-3 ***“Ronda”*** by filmmaker Nick Olanka, a local film you can stream on a mobile phone via iFlix app by Author Geoffrey Ledesma. Photo from unreel.ph

Different award-giving bodies have been organized by the local film industry, the film critics, the academe, the religious groups and the moviegoing public, with the winners and nominees not being the same most of the time since they have different backgrounds and criteria for judging.

Local film festivals like Cinemalaya, Cinema One Originals, CinemaRehiyon, CineFilipino, Sinag Maynila, QCinema, TOFARM, and Pista ng Pelikulang Pilipino

have also given filmmakers and film viewers an alternative to the usual Metro Manila Film Festival fare.

These would not have come into fruition if not for the advent of digital technology, which democratized filmmaking and made shooting cheaper. Film production has been drastically transformed by the rapidly improving technology. Mainstream productions are now shot on digital formats with subsequent processes, such as editing and special effects, undertaken on computers.

Social media platforms have also played a significant role in promoting these films and film festivals to audiences. More schools are offering film education. Several classic films are being restored.

Cinemas have also invested in digital projection facilities capable of producing screen images that rival the sharpness, detail, and brightness of traditional film projection. Only a small number of more specialist cinemas have retained film projection equipment.

In the past few years there has also been an increase in interest in 3D features, sparked by the availability of digital technology. Whether this will be a long-term phenomenon remains to be seen, though the trend towards 3D production involves a greater investment and industry commitment.

Although there are some people who still prefer going to theaters to watch films, the film experience has drastically changed due to advances in technology. Films can now be viewed in monitors, whether on television, computers, cellphones, or other gadgets.

The total film experience might have diminished for some because of the distractions happening around them when they watch films outside theaters. Trends in television technology, however, aim to recreate the experience at home with wider screens, an aspect ratio like film, and surround sound.

ACTIVITY 5: CONTEMPORARY PHILIPPINE CINEMA

1. Watch any of the full-length films (not the short films or not those with running time of less than 20 minutes) on the YouTube channel of either:
 - a. TBA Studios: <https://bit.ly/TBAStudiosPlaylist>
 - b. CinemaOne: <https://bit.ly/CinemaOnePlaylist>
2. What differentiates the film you have chosen to watch from a mainstream Filipino film you have recently seen in the past Metro Manila Film Festival editions?
3. Are there notable differences between them? What are they?
4. Is there a need to differentiate between mainstream and independent films? If “Yes,” why do you think so? If “No,” how should we differentiate Filipino films from each other then?



LESSON 5

FILM AS A VISUAL MEDIUM



0-4 Long shot (still photo) of Agnes Macam Romero with four men carrying a wooden casket in *Manenaya* (2011), a short film by Richard Legaspi

Although film shares many techniques common to literature, its emphasis is still on the moving image, which generally communicates what its most important or interesting aspects are. A major part of a film's story, if ever it has one, is communicated through images, music, and natural sounds.

The properties which make film the most powerful and realistic of the arts also make analyzing it difficult. A motion picture moves continuously in time and space. Once paused, a film is no longer a "motion" picture, and the unique property of the medium is gone. Therefore, film analysis requires us to respond sensitively to the simultaneous and continuous interplay of image, sound, and movement on the screen. This necessity creates the most difficult part of film analysis.



0-5 Medium long shot of Agnes Macam Romero as mother in *Manenaya* (2011), a short film by Richard Legaspi.

We must somehow remain almost totally engrossed in the “real” experience of a film while we maintain a high degree of fairness and critical impartiality. Difficult though it may seem, we can develop this skill, and we must continuously develop it if we want to become truly “film literate.”



0-6 Rolando Inocencio in *“Caretaker”* (2015) a short film by Seymour Sanchez

The technical nature of film also creates difficulties, especially if we do not have some experience in cinematography and film editing. In the absence of such experience, we must familiarize ourselves with the basic techniques of film production to be able to recognize them and evaluate their effectiveness. We should also add several technical terms to our vocabularies since a certain amount of technical language and jargon is needed to analyze and discuss any art form responsibly.

Because the visual element is the film’s basic means of communication, it is the most important factor in distinguishing between the fictional film and the literary forms of fiction and drama. The shot, which is defined by the amount of subject matter that is included within

the frame of the screen, is considered the basic unit of film communication and the source of the medium's expressiveness.

Although film is essentially a two-dimensional medium, the cinematic film overcomes this limitation by creating an illusion of depth. It creates the impression that the screen is not a flat surface but a window through which we observe a three-dimensional world.



0-7 Long shot of Mercedes Cabral as mother in *Pamatid-Gutom* (2012), a short film by Richard Legaspi

Composition in a film, which has to do with the way elements of a shot are placed inside the frame, can help achieve this illusion. Because the cinematic film is a unique medium, the problems that film poses for the director and cinematographer are also unique.

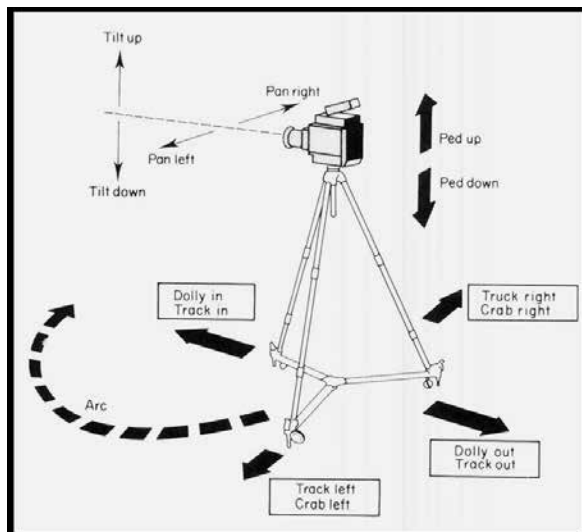
Filmmakers decide how to use the space within an image: when and how to use empty space and what will be conveyed by the arrangement of significant objects



0-8 Rack focus shot (still photo) in *Caretaker* (2015), a short film by Seymour Sanchez

on the sides of the frame, in the foreground or in the background. They also decide whether a composition influences what viewers see short film positioned in relation to the subject and how the subject is situated within the frame, what information is revealed to viewers that the characters do not know, and what viewers learn about the characters' personalities or situations.

Every time a director or cinematographer employs a camera technique, he or she should do so for the purpose of communicating in the most effective way possible, not simply because he or she wants to show off or try out a new trick. You must have a purpose why you use a certain technique. Let us look at some of the camera techniques commonly used in filmmaking.



0-9 Camera Movements by Author Megan Jennings. Diagram from slideplayer.com

An image or object can be framed in a film through an (a) extreme long shot, which is used to show big, outdoor settings; (b) long shot, which frames several people from head to foot and give them enough screen space to do a little moving around; (c) medium shot, which typically shows two characters in the film frame from about the waist up; (d) closeup, which shows only the faces or the heads and shoulders of film actors; and (e) extreme close-up, which shows things like watch faces, suicide notes, eyeballs, or the digital counter attached to the atomic detonator.

There are also those framed in-between these basic shots, specifically called medium close-up and medium long shots.

Camera angles can also be used to change the meaning of a shot. Some examples are:

- a) **normal or eye-level shots**, which feel neutral as the subject is at the same level as the viewer;
- b) **low-angle shots**, which tend to render characters larger-than-life, intimidating, dominant, scary, confident, or in charge;

- c) **high-angle shots**, which look down on characters, thus making them seem inferior, in trouble, put upon, or powerless; and
- d) **crazy angles**, which imply disturbances. These crazy angles are also called canted, inclined, or Dutch (from Deutsche).

With the use of variable lens, a common technique is to “**rack focus**.” In other words, blur the focal planes in the sequence and force the spectator’s eyes to move with those areas of the space that come into sharp focus. Another technique is to “**follow focus**.” In other words, through the focus ring on the lens, you can follow the action or the object in motion.

Even camera movements can contribute to the meaning of a film. This can be through:

- (a) **dolly shots**, where the camera is mounted on a wheeled device and moves on tracks;
- (b) **handheld moves**, where the camera operator walks around with a lightweight camera;
- (c) **crane shots**, where the camera is mounted on an actual crane or “cherry picker” allowing the operator to descend or ascend in a scene;
- (d) **pans and tilts**, where camera is mounted on a rigid device and an operator rotates the camera left to right (pan) or moves up and down (tilt); and
- (e) **aerial shots**, where the camera is airborne, attached to a drone, among others.

Usually when the camera remains in a fixed physical location, it captures movement by approximating the head and eye movements of a human spectator. Panning can be used to follow the horizontal movement of the subject. Tilting can be used to approximate the vertical movement of our head and eyes. A feeling of movement can also be created optically, not mechanically, by slowly changing the focal length of the lens. In this case, zooming in or zooming out can also be used.

Despite the fact that the nature and quality of the story, editing, musical score, sound effects, dialogue, and acting can do much to enhance the film's power, even these important elements cannot save a film whose images are mediocre or poorly edited. As important as the quality of the image may be, the purpose of the film as an artistic endeavor should not be ignored. Similarly, the creation of beautiful images for the sake of beautiful images may work against the film.

ACTIVITY 6: SHOT PRACTICE

1. With any camera at hand, take 20-25 photos using the different camera techniques (framing shots, camera angles, camera movements) and composition discussed in this lesson.
2. Choose from among these photos and tell a story using them.
3. Arrange and consider their proper order in the narrative.

The output you have just produced from the previous activity is a step closer to making your own short film. But before that, we need to compare films to other art forms to be able to get a better understanding of how to appreciate them. Why do we need to study and analyze films in the first place?



LESSON 6

FILM AS AN ART AND AS A BUSINESS



*0-10 Medium shot (still photo) of Frank Corona as town mayor in **Pamatid-Gutom** (2012), a short film by Richard Legaspi.*

Due to the amount of money needed to produce a film, it is both an industry and an art form. There is an ongoing debate between art and commercial considerations. Despite this, it cannot be denied that film is recognized as a unique and powerful art form.

Film is like other artistic media that it employs the compositional elements of the visual arts: line, form, mass, volume, and texture. Film also exploits the subtle interplay of light and shadow like painting and photography. Film manipulates three-dimensional space like sculpture. Film focuses on moving images like pantomime.

As in dance, the images in film have rhythm. Like poetry, film communicates through imagery, metaphor, and symbol. The rhythm of a film is usually related to its music. Like poetry, it also communicates through symbol, metaphor, and imagery. Film

communicates visually and verbally like drama: visually, through action and gesture, and verbally, through dialogue. Film also expands or compresses time and space like a novel, traveling back and forth freely within their wide borders.

Yet, film is unique, set apart from all other media by its quality of free and constant motion. The continuous interplay of sight, sound, and motion allows film to transcend the static limitations of painting and sculpture. Film even surpasses drama in its unique capacity for revealing various points of view, portraying action, manipulating time, and conveying a boundless sense of space.

Unlike the stage play, film can provide a continuous, unbroken flow, which blurs and minimizes transitions without compromising the story's unity. Unlike the novel and the poem, film communicates directly, not through abstract symbols like words on a page but through concrete images and sounds. Film can treat an almost infinite array of subjects.

Film has an unlimited choice of subject and approach to that material. Its mood and treatment can range from the poetic to the classic. In terms of point of view, a film can cover the purely objective to the intensely subjective.



*0-11 Medium shot (still photo) of Rolando Inocencio and Raymond Rinoza talking to each other in **Caretaker** (2015), a short film by Seymour Sanchez*

In depth, film can focus on the surface realities and the purely sensual, or it can dig into the intellectual and philosophical. A film can look to the remote past or probe the distant future. It can make a few seconds seem like hours or compress a century into minutes. Film can have a wide range of feelings from the most fragile, tender, and beautiful to the most brutal, violent, and repulsive.

However, of even greater significance than film's unlimited range in subject matter and treatment is the overwhelming sense of reality it can convey. The continuous stream of sight, sound, and motion creates an excitement that brings the viewer in the cinematic experience.

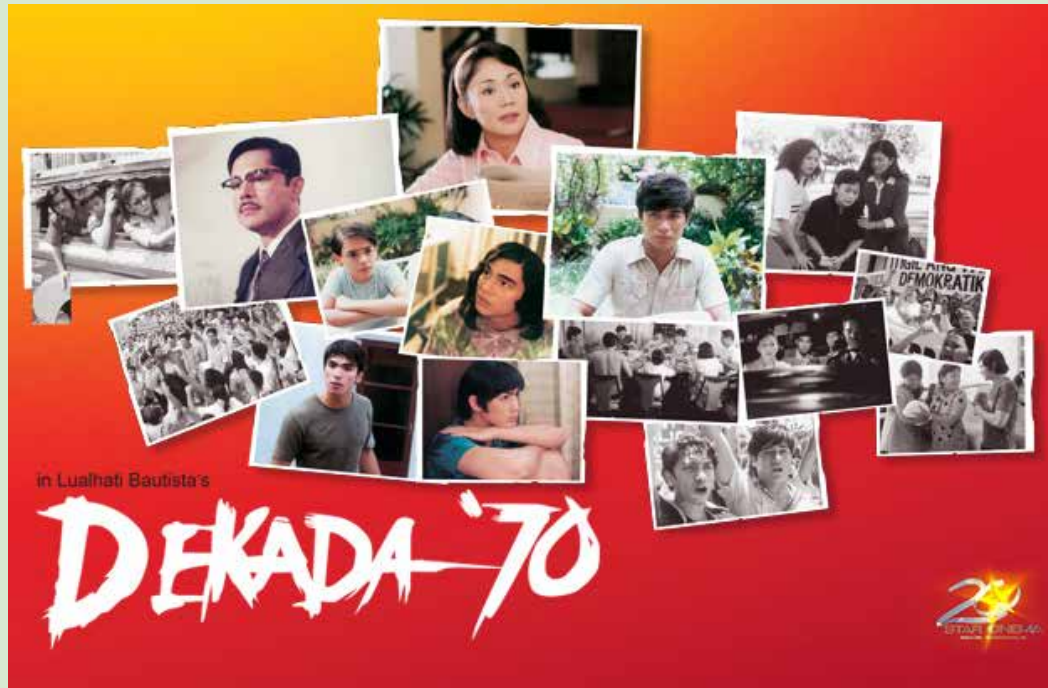
A film can totally immerse viewers in a way that they feel they are part of the film. In other cases, it entertains them, but they can still differentiate it from actual reality. There are some instances when it can seem so distant to them that they become mere spectators of the whole experience.

After watching a film, the viewers go back to their actual reality. It may elicit different reactions from them. Some may like it while others may not. The viewers may immediately forget the whole film, or the visual images may linger in their mind for a day or more.

Through film, fantasy assumes the shape and emotional impact of reality. The technological history of film can be viewed as an ongoing evolution toward greater realism, erasing the border between art and nature.

The motion picture has progressed step by step from drawings, photographs, to projected images, to sound, to color, to wide screen, to 3D and even 4D. By creating images that are larger than life, films have sometimes been made to seem more real than reality.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY: THE FILM REVIEW



0-12 Chito Roño's "*Dekada '70*" (2002) movie poster. Photo from pinterest.ph

The film review of "Dekada '70" written by Seymour Sanchez and published in The Philippine Star on October 8, 2006 is included in this Learning Resource Module (See Notes to the User). After reading it, work on your own review or critique of a film you watched from the playlists of TBA Studios or Cinema One Originals, based on the given rubric.

1. Create a detailed analysis of your chosen Filipino film based on all the concepts learned in the module.
2. What is the film about?
3. What does it want to tell the audience?
4. How are you able to relate to its story?
5. Who among the actors are suitable in playing their respective characters? Why did you say so?
6. How are camera techniques used to enhance the meaning of the film?

NOTES TO THE USER

RUBRICS

Rubric for projects based on the review, analysis, or discussion of film works or their component parts

| CRITERIA | EXCELLENT | VERY SATISFACTORY | SATISFACTORY | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| SUBJECT MATTER | <p>Student shows a deep understanding of the subject matter and its greater implications.</p> <p>The analysis shows integration of some advanced or researched concepts.</p> | Student shows an understanding of the subject matter and it is evident in the execution of the project. | Student shows some understanding of the subject matter, but confusion is evident in some aspects of the project. | Student shows very little understanding of the subject matter and thoroughly misinterprets the requirements for the class. |
| RESEARCH & INSIGHT | The project shows evidence of diligent research and convergent thinking. The student showed a great or interesting insight; the project is very well thought-out. | The project shows evidence of research and convergent thinking. The student is insightful, and the project is well thought-out. | The project shows evidence of research or convergent thinking, but the project seems rushed. | The project does not show evidence of research or convergent thinking, the student is uninspired, project seems rushed or poorly thought-out. |
| FINAL PRODUCT | Final project is complete and well-presented. Shows excellent research, careful planning, and excellent execution. | Project is polished and shows good research, planning, vision, and good execution. | Project is finished and turned in but is rushed and is poorly presented. | Project proposal is sloppy, illegible, unfinished or incomplete. |
| STRUCTURE & FLOW | <p>Project is clear, concise, and has a logical structure and flow.</p> <p>Work shows deep consideration of the execution of the project.</p> | <p>Project is well organized and has a sensible flow and structure.</p> <p>Minor elements may need clarification but is otherwise well made.</p> | Project makes general sense but requires some work to organize and structure in a logical and sensible manner. | <p>Project is vague, disjointed, and shows no sense, structure, or flow.</p> <p>Confusing to read, difficult to understand.</p> |

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

Seymour Sanchez, published in *The Philippine Star*, October 8, 2006

After “Bata, Bata, Pa’no Ka Ginawa?” gained commercial and critical success, it is evident that Star Cinema again banked on the movie’s winning formula by bringing back the triumvirate of director Chito Roño, writer Lualhati Bautista and Vilma Santos in another touching political drama based on another award-winning novel.

In “Dekada ’70,” it seems Roño, Bautista and Star Cinema listened to critics of their earlier collaboration and they have all improved in handling another serious and more ambitious undertaking. The cinematic version completely caught me off-guard and I must admit it has managed to be faithful to one of the academe’s most assigned and most read Filipino novel. Ever since I read the novel, I have immediately developed a special liking for it.

Coming from a family of five boys and one girl, with our mother working as a public school teacher and our father being the dominant figure at home, I could easily relate to the dynamics of the family relationships the story’s main characters are into.

The film revolves around the story of a full-time housewife Amanda Bartolome (Santos), her engineer-husband Julian Sr. (Christopher de Leon), and their five sons – Julian Jr./Jules (Piolo Pascual), Isagani/Gani (Carlos Agassi), Emmanuel/ Em (Marvin Agustin), Jason (Danilo Barrios) and Benjamin/ Bingo (John Wayne Sace) – amid a turbulent decade characterized by political repression and economic turmoil. The couple, despite living in the most hateful period in Philippine history, raised their children calmly within their means and to the best of their abilities as different trials come their way.

For starters, the movie brings to life images of the colorful yet infamous past. As mature audiences wax nostalgic over psychedelic prints, neon colors, platform shoes, bell-bottomed jeans, shaggy hair and other facets of the hippie lifestyle, they are also treated to scenes of protest rallies and student demonstrations usually dispersed by the Metrocom, then the recognized police force in the metropolis. Production designer Manny Morfe tried to be

as careful with details as possible, bringing into the set old Coca-Cola soft drink bottles, vinyl records, the old-fashioned jukebox, heavy phone sets with the rotating dialer and “short shorts,” among others.

Santos, as usual, delivers a fine performance reminiscent of her role in *Bata, Bata...* although her character here is not as fiery and aggressive as the previous one. Amanda is a woman searching for her true identity and struggling to find out her place in “a man’s world,” as Julian Sr. often reminds her. De Leon, on the other hand, reminds me of his similar role in *Eskapo* although Geny Lopez actually exists in real life while Julian Sr. is just a product of Bautista’s imagination, yet it might resemble someone she met or even knew in her life.

Pascual is a revelation as their eldest son who was drawn into student activism by the infamous dictatorship. He fits the role of Jules and he has managed to come up with another credible performance in his career. His clandestine meeting with Amanda before his capture is perhaps one of the most poignant scenes in the movie.

Agassi, the second son, is plausible as the playboy Gani whose ambition is to become a part of the US Navy, a clear departure from his nationalist brother. The role does not require much from the actor after Gani fulfilled his dream and later went abroad.

Agustin, while eliciting innocent jeers from some viewers for his unusual hairdo, still stays afloat as the writer in the family. From a mere author of love stories, Em eventually became a dedicated campus journalist before turning into a playwright for a cultural group.

Barrios, on the other hand, is a big puzzle as Jason, the fourth son who is the only one with an American-sounding name according to the novel. While his character is portrayed humorously in several scenes, his transformation from an effeminate boy to another typical teenager in love like Gani is somewhat confusing. Nevertheless, his role is also a minor one as compared to Jules, thus saving him from further scrutiny.

Sace's character as Bingo is not as challenging as Carlo Aquino's or Jiro Manio's earlier roles that won them Best Child Performers but he was still given an "additional" scene (not included in the novel) just to see him cry, with less satisfactory results.

Ana Capri appears in a significant role as Mara, Jules' wife who is also a member of the NPA. While she and Evelyn are instrumental in pointing out to Amanda her role as a woman in the society, I must point out that her unkempt hair all throughout the movie is totally uncalled for.

"Dekada '70" stands out from the annual holiday cinematic treats we have been used to seeing, not only for its originality but also for its audacity and daring. The interrelationships among the characters' lives and the events happening around them underline the role we have to play in molding the society we want to live in. Indeed, the movie is significant in learning about the past, understanding the present and anticipating the future.

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