2026 PaS Workshop
ASEAN · Bangkok, Thailand

A PURE GESTURE
UN GESTE PUR

CAMBODIA

MAIN DATA

Category	Drama
Length	90 min
Language	French, Khmer, English, Teochew
Shooting format	Digital 4K - Ratio 1.85
Shooting location	Cambodia
Shooting dates	Early 2028
Expected date of completion	Late 2028
Stage of production	Script development, Financing

PRODUCTION

Budget	530,000 €
Financing in place	27,000 €
Production companies	Kongchak Pictures Ltd., Sameleng Production
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	/

SYNOPSIS

Sébastien, a French-Cambodian stage director from Paris, moves to Phnom Penh to create a contemporary adaptation of the Reamker, Cambodia's Ramayana. His partner Joël soon joins him as they consider building a life together there. When Sébastien's uncle dies, he agrees to take in Dara, the man's eight-year-old son.
As Sébastien prepares for Dara to enter his life, the boy's mother, whom he had been told had abandoned him, reappears, claiming that the family refuses to return her child. Sébastien then discovers that his own mother has falsified documents to send Dara to France for adoption, convinced she is securing him a better future.
Caught between competing claims over Dara, Sébastien increasingly shuts Joël out and begins to lose control of the life he has carefully built. The child's fate forces him to confront the family violence he thought he had left behind, and the ways it still shapes him.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Nearly ten years ago, I moved to Cambodia to work for a cultural NGO. During that time, my family asked me to temporarily take in a young cousin whose father was dying. I am not interested in reconstructing those events, but in exploring what they revealed about family, care and the stories we tell ourselves when we believe we are helping someone.
The film comes from an intimate question: what happens when the desire to protect another person is entangled with wounds that have never been resolved? I am interested in the way love, guilt, duty and projection can become almost impossible to separate, especially within families shaped by migration, sacrifice and silence.
I imagine the film with a restrained mise en scène, grounded in ordinary spaces, gestures and conversations. Tension will come less from dramatic escalation than from what circulates beneath the surface: what is withheld, misread, displaced or left unsaid.
The Reamker gives the film another layer through the figure of the rescuer and the person being rescued. It allows me to question who gets to speak, who gets to decide, and what happens when care becomes a way of imposing a narrative on someone else.
For me, the film is ultimately about inheritance: not only what violence leaves behind, but what we unknowingly carry forward. There is no redemption here, only the possibility of recognizing what remains unresolved and beginning, however late, to reach the child left behind.

CONTACT

Producers - Loy Te - loy@kongchak.com & Nicolas Thevenet - nicolas@kongchak.com
Director - Jean-Baptiste Phou - jbphou@gmail.com

DIRECTOR JEAN-BAPTISTE PHOU

Jean-Baptiste Phou is a French-Cambodian writer, director, and multidisciplinary artist based in Phnom Penh, working across theatre, literature, film, and performance.
He began as an actor, appearing in WHITE SOLDIER by Erick Zonca, THE MISSING PICTURE by Rithy Panh, and FLA by Djinn Carrénard, before writing and directing his first play CAMBODGE, ME VOICI (2011).
In 2014, he created ETHNIK STARS, a musical fiction web series with CNC pilot support.
From 2017 to 2020, he served as Head of Creative Programs at Cambodian Living Arts. He is the author of 80 MOTS DU CAMBODGE (L'Asiathèque, 2023) and COMING OUT OF MY SKIN (Seagull Books, 2023), later adapted for the stage.
His experimental documentary LA LANGUE DE MA MÈRE received the Audience Prize for Best Documentary at the Vesoul International Film Festival of Asian Cinemas and the Best Diaspora Film Award at Cinemasio.
In 2025, he developed SEDA, his first fiction short film, co-produced by Kongchak Pictures and Sâmleng. The project received the SONY Award and expanded through Platform Busan with co-producers from Hong Kong, Singapore, and France.
In 2026, he was awarded a Villa Albertine residency in San Francisco, pursuing research with Cambodian diasporic communities in collaboration with UC Berkeley.

PRODUCER LOY TE

Loy Te is a Cambodian-French producer and founder of Kongchak Pictures. He began on the distribution side, helping establish Cambodia's first cinema chain, Legend Cinema, before moving into production.
He first gained recognition for spearheading action genre cinema in Cambodia, creating the country's first local stunt team for JAILBREAK (Fantasia 2017), Cambodia's first title acquired by Netflix, followed by THE PREY (Busan 2018). He has since shifted toward auteur-driven cinema, producing directorial debuts at major international festivals: YOUNG LOVE (Locarno 2021), WHITE BUILDING (Venice 2021, Best Actor), TENEMENT (Rotterdam 2024, Cambodia's submission for the 98th Academy Awards), and BECOMING HUMAN (Venice 2025).
Strong regional co-productions include VIET AND NAM by Minh Quy Truong (Cannes Un Certain Regard 2024), THIS CITY IS A BATTLEFIELD by Mouly Surya (Rotterdam 2025), and GRANDMA NAI WHO PLAYED FAVOURITES by Chheangkea (Sundance 2025, Jury Award).
In 2019, alongside sound designer Vincent Villa, he launched Kongchak Studio, Cambodia's first audio post-production facility and home to the country's only certified Dolby Atmos theatrical stage.
Loy is an alumnus of Berlinale Talents and EAVE Ties That Bind.

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COSMO
คอสโม
THAILAND

MAIN DATA

Category	Dramedy
Length	100 min
Language	Thai
Shooting format	Digital 4K - Ratio 1.85
Shooting location	Thailand
Shooting dates	2028
Expected date of completion	2029
Stage of production	In development

PRODUCTION

Budget	550,000 €
Financing in place	7,900 €
Production companies	Extra Virgin (Thailand), White Light Studio (Thailand)
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Thailand Ministry of Culture's Script Development Fund (2025)

SYNOPSIS

While exploring a maze-like cave, MUD reveals her pregnancy to GRID, her archaeologist boyfriend, causing him to faint on the spot.
Elsewhere, MOD convinces her yoga gang to help BEE flee an allegedly abusive husband, only for Bee to return home, magically turning the gang into dogs.
Meanwhile, NANA joins her crush HARDY on a nighttime treasure hunt and, after uncovering an ancient coin, he confesses his love to her during their ride home.
Months later, after a near-death experience, Grid tries to reconcile with Mud, but the attempt ends in disaster.
On the beach, a film crew is waiting for the clouds to clear. Deciding the situation is hopeless, the DIRECTOR calls a legendary Muay Thai boxer to punch a hole in the sky.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2022, my archaeologist friend and I were discussing the possibility of making a film about Suvarnabhumi, a mercantile community in southern Thailand around 2,000 years ago. The name appears in both Western and Eastern historical records, often described as "a golden land." These accounts paint a picture of a prosperous outpost, teeming with merchants and explorers from around the world.

The aspect of Suvarnabhumi that resonated with me most was its cosmopolitan nature — how people from different nations, cultures, genders, and religions came into contact with one another. I wanted to tell stories of real people living in that area today. Since the Suvarnabhumi era, southern Thailand has remained a meeting point of cultures and people.

Fortunately, back in 2018, I had the chance to take part in the Deep South Young Filmmaker workshop, initiated by Pimpaka Towira, an award-winning Thai filmmaker. We traveled to the south and taught filmmaking to young people in the area. The people I met, the stories they shared, and the moments I witnessed became the foundation of COSMO.

Although the film follows multiple characters, I was able to weave in personal elements, including my deadpan surreal humor.

CONTACT

Producer - Paranee Lerdwattanasombat - paranee.mew@gmail.com
Director - Kong Pahurak - kinograf.pictures@gmail.com

DIRECTOR KONG PAHURAK

After his father brought him to watch INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE (1989) in a local theater, Kong Pahurak has become obsessed with two things: history and filmmaking. At university, he studied archaeology and experienced the excavation process firsthand. After graduating, Kong pursued his other calling: filmmaking. For his master's degree, he wrote a thesis about Ingmar Bergman's films before receiving the prestigious MEXT scholarship to pursue a further degree abroad in Japan.
To date, Kong has made a series of short films and one feature-length film, all of which have been shown in international film festivals. Kong has also worked as a cinematographer for many award-winning Southeast Asian filmmakers, including Aditya Assarat, Pimpaka Towira, Woo Min Jin, and Edmund Yeo.
Outside of filmmaking, Kong has been translating classic English literature and non-fiction into Thai, notably the works of Robert Louis Stevenson, H.G. Wells, and Philip K. Dick.

PRODUCER PARANEE LERDWATTANASOMBAT

Paranee Lerdwattanasombat is a Thailand-based film producer working across feature films and series. She began her career as an assistant director on THE ISLAND FUNERAL (2015), directed by Pimpaka Towira, a film widely recognized in international film festivals. Her credits include REGRETFULLY AT DAWN (2024), which premiered in San Sebastián.
She is also actively involved in talent development initiatives, having managed short film training and incubation programs such as the Deep South Young Filmmaker project and the Content Lab: Mid-Career Project (2024–2025).
In addition to her production work, Paranee has experience in international film festival management, serving as Festival Manager of the Bangkok International Film Festival 2025.

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LASTO
LASTO

PHILIPPINES

MAIN DATA

Genre	Dark Comedy
Length	90 min
Language	Bisaya, Tagalog, English
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Philippines
Shooting dates	February-March, 2029
Expected date of completion	January, 2030
Stage of production	Script development

PRODUCTION

Budget	800,000 €
Financing in place	150,000 €
Production companies	Cine Canawili Productions Inc
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	IsaPelikula, AFAN, queerframes

SYNOPSIS

Back in his hometown to rebuild his life, Hans bets big on an illegal numbers game "lasto" and miraculously wins. But one of his neighbors steals the prize. Forming an unholy team with his niece (and the thief's family), Hans sets on a wild road trip to take back his winnings and soon discovers a whole new world of lies, cheatings, and scams.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Growing up, I believed the world was inherently kind. Raised in a Protestant household and sheltered by my family, violence and cruelty existed only in movies. I thought trust could be freely given. That belief unraveled in adulthood.

In 2023, while my brother Ivan was battling hemangioma, I was scammed out of money meant for his treatment. His passing soon after left me with lasting guilt. Beyond the loss, the experience changed how I see trust and humanity, making me wary of the digital systems that enable deception.

I realized my story was not unique. Friends faced similar betrayals—one lost her savings due to a relative's gambling addiction, another had his lottery winnings stolen by someone he trusted. These stories reflect a broader reality: as inequality grows and life becomes more digital, scams and exploitation have become part of everyday Filipino life.

Through LASTO, I explore these experiences as part of a larger social condition. Framed as a dark comedy road film set in Mindanao, it follows neighbors chasing a man who stole their gambling winnings. Beneath its humor lies a story about trust, greed, and how inequality pushes ordinary people against each other.

CONTACT

Producer - Tin Velasco - tinvelascofilms@gmail.com
Director - Wowa Medroso - jacemedroso@gmail.com

DIRECTOR WOWA MEDROSO

Joshua Caesar "Wowa" Medroso is a graphic designer, writer, photographer, and filmmaker based in Davao City. Holding degrees in Mass Communication and Literature, his work explores Mindanawon stories, reflecting his upbringing and the experiences of marginalized communities while addressing the erasure of local literature and culture. His acclaimed short films include TRABUNGKO, EYES WITH WONDER, HERE ARE FLOWERS, KUMBIYOR, and TONG ADLAW NGA NAG-SNOW SA PINAS, which received numerous awards, including Best Film honors at the Mindanao Film Festival, Sine Kabataan, Binisaya Film Festival, and the Viddsee Juree Asia Awards. His films have also been recognized by Cinemalaya, the Society of Filipino Film Reviewers, Gawad Urian, and the Viddsee Jury Awards. His debut feature, KANTIL (TRENCH), premiered at Cinemalaya and earned Sue Prado the Best Supporting Actress Award.

PRODUCER TIN VELASCO

Tin Velasco is an independent film producer based in the Philippines and founder of Cine Canawili Productions, a company dedicated to championing community-rooted Filipino stories with a focus on women, queer narratives, and under-represented voices. She produced GULAY LANG, MANONG (2024), winner of the Audience Choice Award at Cinemalaya, and OPEN ENDINGS (2025), Cinemalaya's highest-grossing film, recipient of the Best Ensemble Award, and an official selection at international festivals in the UK and Boston before its global release on Amazon Prime Video. Her producing credits also include A CATHOLIC SCHOOLGIRL and LIVING THINGS. Tin has contributed to internationally acclaimed Philippine films screened at Cannes, Sundance, Toronto, Locarno, and Busan. She is an alumnus of the Full Circle Lab Creative Producers Lab and Platform BUSAN.

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LUZ AND FLOR
LUZONENSIS AT FLORESIENSIS

PHILIPPINES

MAIN DATA

Genre	Fantasy, Social Realism
Length	90 min
Language	English, Filipino, Spanish, Bahasa
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Spain, Philippines
Shooting dates	November, 2027
Expected date of completion	August, 2028
Stage of production	Advanced development

PRODUCTION

Budget	523,000 €
Financing in place	56,900 €
Production companies	Katalog Films
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Dhaka International Film Festival West meets East Screenplay Lab, Talents Tokyo, Isapelikula Incubator Lab, Qcinema Project Market

SYNOPSIS

In Madrid, Luzonensis, inspired by the extinct Homo luzonensis of the Philippines, struggles to build a future with his Spanish partner, Celina, while supporting his ailing father back home. Their fragile life is disrupted by the arrival of Floresiensis, an Indonesian migrant searching for her missing father, a political exile from the 1998 Jakarta riots. Drawn together by shared histories of displacement and colonialism, Luzonensis and Floresiensis develop an unexpected connection while working for Rey, a wealthy Filipino with ties to the Marcos dictatorship. As buried histories resurface and loyalties are tested, Luzonensis finds himself torn between the life he has built and the roots he cannot leave behind.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In 2007, archaeologist Armand Mijares discovered Homo luzonensis in a cave in my hometown. Believed to be among the earliest human species found in the Philippines, it lived around 67,000 years ago. Its closest known relative, Homo floresiensis, was discovered in Flores, Indonesia.

When I visited Indonesia in 2023, I was struck by how much Filipinos and Indonesians share, not only language and humor, but also parallel histories of colonization. These legacies continue to shape our identities, economies, and sense of belonging today.

This film imagines Luzonensis and Floresiensis as migrant workers in present-day Madrid. As prehistoric beings navigating the former center of empire, they embody questions of origin, displacement, and survival. Set against Madrid's housing crisis, the film explores what remains of us after centuries of colonialism and how we continue to redefine the meaning of home through migration, memory, and connection.

CONTACT

Producer - Kristine De Leon - kristinejadeleon@gmail.com
Director - Glenn Barit - barit.glenn@gmail.com

DIRECTOR GLENN BARIT

Glenn Barit is a Filipino filmmaker, sound designer, and scorer. His works often reflect identity, class struggle, and regionalism, usually in a playful form.

CLEANERS, his debut feature film, won Best Film, Best Screenplay, and the Audience Choice Award at QCinema IFF 2019. It has since screened at Busan International Film Festival, Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival, and Torino Film Festival, among others.

His short film LUZONENSIS OSTEOPOROSIS won the NETPAC Jury Prize and Audience Choice Award at QCinema IFF 2022, and later screened at Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival and Fantasia International Film Festival in 2023.

He is currently developing his sophomore feature film, LUZ AND FLOR, which received the Talents Tokyo Award.

PRODUCER KRISTINE DE LEON

Kristine De Leon is a Filipino producer whose work has received international recognition. Her recent films include ALI by Adnan Al Rajeev and AGAPITO by Arvin Belarmino and Kyla Romero, both selected for the Official Competition of the 2025 Festival de Cannes, with ALI receiving a Special Mention from the jury. Both films were also selected for the Toronto International Film Festival. She also produced TAGA (2025), directed by Jill Sachs, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and RADIKALS (2024), which competed at the 63rd Semaine de la Critique in Cannes. An alumna of the Busan Asian Film School, Kristine has participated in international industry programs including Produire au Sud, La Fabrique Cinéma, the Zurich Film Festival Academy, and APOST Lab.

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MAYBE TODAY, IF NOT TODAY, MAYBE TOMORROW
每一天，陽光和雨和風
MALAYSIA

MAIN DATA

Category	Family Drama
Length	150 min
Language	Cantonese, Malaysian local languages
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Malaysia
Shooting dates	Oct-Nov 2028
Expected date of completion	May 2029
Stage of production	Script development

PRODUCTION

Budget	644,000 €
Financing in place	0 €
Production companies	Afternoon Pictures
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	HK Film Lab 2021, HAF 2022, mylab 2022, MIFFest Project Market 2022, Finas One Step Closer: Script Development Workshop 2025

SYNOPSIS

In Ipoh, a limestone valley town once shaped by tin mining, eighteen-year-old Howe stands uncertainly at the threshold of adulthood. While his friends prepare to leave for Singapore or Kuala Lumpur, he lingers in quiet daily life with Kam, his ageing grandfather and former miner.
Three generations share a roof as development creeps across the valley. Limestone mountains are blasted apart, ancestral homes sold to outsiders.
When Kam suffers a stroke, Howe stays closer, their days unfolding in small routines beneath the mango tree. Then Howe leaves. Shortly after, Kam dies.
Returning for the funeral, Howe moves through days of Taoist ritual, relatives, and memory. His grandmother shares a story from Kam's youth. In the distance, quarry blasting echoes through the valley. Behind him, the family chatters on. The sun returns.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I grew up believing mountains could not disappear. Ipoh, my hometown in northern Malaysia, sits in a limestone valley I once thought older than memory, older than leaving. I believed it would outlast all of us.
Years later, I returned to find entire hills cut open by quarries. Around the same time, my grandfather passed away. Each return to Ipoh after that made me see the place differently. My parents had grown older. The town had been changing all along.
During his final months, I sat with him beneath the mango tree behind our house. Like many men of his generation, he rarely spoke about the past directly. His memories surfaced in fragments, drifting between family history and folklore. I began to understand that memory does not always survive as clear narrative. Sometimes it lingers in gestures, silences, and the way a body inhabits a place.
Ipoh carries several layers of time at once: geological, historical, and the fragile human time of family life, where a person can disappear almost without warning. This film exists where those timelines touch.
This is not nostalgia. It begins with the knowledge that nothing remains intact. What matters is staying with things long enough to feel what they still carry.
For me, filmmaking is a way of staying with what is disappearing long enough to see it clearly.

CONTACT

Producer - Lee Yve Vonn - afternoonpics@gmail.com
Director - Lim Han Loong - lhanl1116@gmail.com

DIRECTOR LIM HAN LOONG

Han Loong graduated from Universiti Sains Malaysia with a Bachelor's Degree in Communication Studies (Film and Broadcasting) and has been directing short films, documentaries, commercials, music videos, and telemovies since 2012.
His short THE WAY WE LOVE was a finalist at the Astro New Director Award 2014 and was recognized as ASEAN Top 10 at the SKT Short Film Competition, going on to screen at the Beijing College Film Festival (2015). FAMILY DINNER won the Grand Prize at the MM2 Movie Makers Competition 2020. His recent short IN THE VALLEY has screened at Busan, Singapore, Q-Cinema, Red Sea, Oberhausen, and beyond.
Han Loong is an alumnus of the Next New Wave Young Filmmaker Workshop (Directing) and has served as Festival Manager at SeaShorts Film Festival since 2017. He also launched Malaysia's first Chinese film magazine, WUBEN, in 2018.
He is currently developing ITCH (Singapore Objectifs Short Film Incubator Programme) and his debut feature MAYBE TODAY, IF NOT TODAY, MAYBE TOMORROW with mentors including Ho Yuhang, Lorna Tee, Françoise von Roy, and Anthony Chen.
He believes filmmaking is an art to express the relationships, struggles, and conflicts of ordinary people in their daily lives.

PRODUCER LEE YVE VONN

Yve Vonn is a Malaysian producer at Afternoon Pictures, a boutique production house championing Asian cinema based in Kuala Lumpur, and Programme Manager for mylab, a fiction feature film development lab focusing on Asian cinema.
She produced OASIS OF NOW by Chia Chee Sum, a Busan New Currents and Berlinale Forum title that received the Silver Hanoman Award at Jogja-NETPAC, Best Director and Best Actress at Ho Chi Minh International Film Festival, and additional awards across Barcelona, Sharjah, and Five Flavours. She co-produced HUNGRY GHOST DINER by Wejun Cho, a NETPAC award recipient from BiFAN, selected to Rotterdam and now on Netflix Southeast Asia.
Her short film credits include IN THE VALLEY by Lim Han Loong (Busan, Red Sea), SHANGHAI QUARANTOPIA by Clarissa Zhang (Ji.hlava, FFD Jogja), BLACK HOLE MONSTER by Sim Seow Kee (Oberhausen), and BLIND MOUTH (BISU) by Chris Leong (Taipei Golden Horse, Tampere).
Yve Vonn has presented projects at Berlinale Talents, Locarno Open Doors, HAF, NAFF, Tokyo Gap Financing Market, Golden Horse Film Project Promotion, and IDFA Forum, among others.

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PRAY TO THE THUNDER
இடிக்கு ஒரு கும்புடு
MALAYSIA

MAIN DATA

Genre	Coming-of-Age, Drama
Length	90 min
Language	Tamil
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Malaysia, Philippines
Shooting dates	July, 2027
Expected date of completion	March, 2028
Stage of production	Late script development, Financing

PRODUCTION

Budget	870,000 €
Financing in place	130,000 €
Production companies	Sixtymac Pictures, Idiosync INC., Akanga Film Asia, Epicmedia Productions, DW Productions, Weydemann Bros.
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Talents Tokyo, Semaine de la Critique NEXT STEP, Full Circle Lab, BIFAN NAFF Project Market, QCinema Project Market

SYNOPSIS

Thunder is a fiery young Malaysian Tamil punk rocker who dreams of taking her band beyond their housing estate and onto the international stage. Growing up she finds herself caught between worlds: in her traditional Tamil community, she is seen as a vessel of cultural ritual and in the underground punk scene, she is a voice of youthful resistance. When a music competition offers her band a rare shot at recognition and a better future, tensions mounts in her community as cultural expectations, generational values, and fears over identity preservation begin to surface. Faced with pressure from her community leader and her own family, Thunder is forced to confront what it means to belong.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I am making PRAY TO THE THUNDER because I believe cinema must carve space for voices that have long been unheard. Growing up Malaysian Tamil, I lived with the constant feeling of being on the margins our community treated as outsiders by the nation, and silenced from within by our own gatekeepers. This film is born from that double bind: the struggle against external authority, and the equally painful struggle against internal conservatism. I want to tell a story that confronts the irony of being part of a culture that fiercely guards "tradition" while neglecting the very youth meant to inherit it.

The characters in PRAY TO THE THUNDER are young, restless, rebellious. They mirror my own search for identity which is caught between love for community and rage at its constraints.

This film is not a plea for recognition or the romanticization of minority struggle. It's an act of reclamation. I want to show Tamil youth not as tragic victims, but as defiant, funny, flawed, and alive individuals whose rebellion carries the same pulse as punk rock.

CONTACT

Producer - Choo Mun Bel (Belz) - belz@sixtymacproduction.com
Director - Ananth Subramaniam - itsananthsubra@gmail.com

DIRECTOR ANANTH SUBRAMANIAM

Ananth Subramaniam is a Malaysian filmmaker of Tamil descent whose work explores themes of ancestral identity through the lens of post-colonial Tamil experiences. In 2025, his film BLEAT! became the first Malaysian short selected at Cannes, premiering at 64th Semaine de la Critique and winning the Queer Palm. The film also won the International Youth Jury Prize at the Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival, was selected for MoMA's New Directors/New Films programme, and screened at more than 40 festivals worldwide. His latest short, Holy Crowd, premiered at 2026 Cannes, under the 65th Semaine de la Critique. His other filmmaking credits include The House of Brick & Stone and Liar Land, the latter of which received a Special Mention at the 73rd Locarno Film Festival. He is in development for his debut feature Pray To The Thunder, through Berlinale's Talents Tokyo and Semaine de la Critique's Next Step program.

PRODUCER CHOO MUN BEL

Choo Mun Bel began his filmmaking career in 2009 and founded Sixtymac Pictures in 2010. He is an alumnus of Locarno Open Doors, Busan Asian Film Academy, SGIFF Asian Producers Network, and EAVE Ties That Bind. He also served as a committee member of the New Asian Producers Network (NAPNET) in 2022. Over the past decade, he has produced award-winning short films including BLEAT! (Queer Palm, Cannes Critics' Week), LIAR LAND (Locarno Open Doors Special Mention), THE HOUSE OF BRICK AND STONE (Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival), and SPELLING TEST (Singapore International Film Festival). He is currently developing his debut feature, PRAY TO THE THUNDER, which has been selected for Cannes Semaine de la Critique NEXT STEP, Talents Tokyo, and Full Circle Lab. The project has also received major international awards, including the Bucheon Award (BIFAN NAFF), the SEAPITCH Award (Bangkok), and the SEA Co-Production Grant Award (QCinema Project Market).

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SO LONG, MAESALONG
สันติคีรี
THAILAND

MAIN DATA

Genre	Political Love Story
Length	90 min
Language	Thai, Chinese
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Chiang Rai, Thailand
Shooting dates	November, 2027
Expected date of completion	May, 2028
Stage of production	Script development

PRODUCTION

Budget	600,000 €
Financing in place	191,053 €
Production companies	Error Brothers
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Thailand National Development Fund, Thailand National Production Fund

SYNOPSIS

In the 1990s, Tuan, a young man of Chinese descent, returns to Maesalong after working in Taiwan. At his family's request, he becomes a village headman, only to discover bribery, corruption, and pressure from armed forces.

He meets Orn, a Thai teacher newly assigned to the village, and they fall in love. Hoping for a simple life together, Tuan opens a small snooker hall, the first time he chooses his own path.

But violence and the drug trade slowly pull him in. When their snooker hall is mysteriously burned down, Tuan is held responsible, leaving Orn to raise their child alone.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Maesalong is where I was born and the home of my father's family. At first, I imagined making a beautiful film about family, warmth, and love in the mountains of Northern Thailand, the story of my parents I had always wanted to tell. But as I researched their history and my hometown, my perception changed. Maesalong was not as peaceful as I had imagined.

In those days, the law barely reached the mountains. Different factions lived alongside one another, conflict was always close, and injustice was part of everyday life.

My nickname is Snooker. As a child, I only knew that my parents had opened a snooker hall together. As I grew older, I realized it represented their attempt to choose the life they wanted in a place where choices were limited.

The snooker hall was eventually destroyed, but their dream and determination live on through me. I am living proof of their effort, sacrifice, and the freedom they fought to give me.

This is why I am drawn to people struggling to live with dignity despite forces more powerful than themselves. After exploring this struggle in my documentary BREAKING THE CYCLE (2024), I continue the search through fiction with SO LONG, MAESALONG, a story of justice, love, and survival told through the eyes of ordinary people.

CONTACT

Producer - Itt Patiparn Boontarig - ittpatiparn@gmail.com
Director - Thanakrit Duangmaneeporn - furygump@gmail.com

DIRECTOR SNOOK THANAKRIT DUANGMANEEPORN

Snook Thanakrit Duangmaneeporn was born in Maesalong, Chiang Rai, Northern Thailand, and is based in Chiang Rai, where he makes films rooted in the people, history, and stories of the region.

His debut feature documentary, BREAKING THE CYCLE (2024), premiered at Hot Docs and won Best Documentary at the Thailand National Film Association Awards. It became one of the highest-grossing Thai documentaries in recent years. His fiction shorts include EVERYBODY'S FINE (2017), a White Elephant Award runner-up at the Thai Short Film & Video Festival, and GHOST OF PHUKANG (2021), which competed at the Singapore International Film Festival.

PRODUCER ITT PATIPARN BOONTARIG

Itt Patiparn Boontarig is a Thai filmmaker and the founder of Error Brothers, a Chiang Rai–based production company. The company produced the feature film SOLIDS BY THE SEASHORE (2023) in collaboration with Diversion and Mit Out Sound Films. The film premiered at the Busan International Film Festival, where it received two awards, including the LG OLED New Currents Award. It also won the Prix du Jury and the Coup de Cœur INALCO Award at the 30th Festival International des Cinémas d'Asie de Vesoul. Itt also produced CRYSTALLIZED MEMORY (2022), which screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and New Directors/New Films in New York. In addition, he leads the CR Film Club, which supports regional filmmakers and promotes community-based cinema.

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TAWURAN

INDONESIA

MAIN DATA

Genre	Coming of Age, Drama, Crime
Length	100 min
Language	Indonesian
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Jakarta, Indonesia
Shooting dates	December, 2028
Expected date of completion	August, 2029
Stage of production	In development

PRODUCTION

Budget	990,000 €
Financing in place	30,000€
Production companies	Arungi Films
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Lab/Cation Screenwriting Workshop (MTN x Salaka x Katatinut) - Nov. 2025 AFAN x PaS Film Camp (Philipphines) - Aug. 2026

SYNOPSIS

Years after witnessing his father's murder by corrupt police captain Wilopo; Raka (13) enters school on a tuition subsidy. His older brother Dipa (24) becomes an honest cop. In a tawuran (student fight), Raka defends his best friend/Wilopo's son, Bangsat (13), against Rangga (13), son of a tycoon-politician. Consequently, Raka is expelled and loses his subsidy. To raise money; Raka (15), Bangsat (15), and a student named Aji (15) launch a profitable tawuran gambling ring. Wilopo (51), now running for governor against Rangga's father (50), exploits Raka to launch a smear campaign framing Rangga as a tawuran criminal for bad PR. During this, Bangsat crosses the line and kills Rangga. To save himself, Wilopo frames Raka and Aji for the murder, even killing Aji to tie up loose ends. When Raka threatens to reveal the truth, Wilopo kills him too. Failure multiple times to shield Raka from violence, Dipa crosses the line and kills Wilopo.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I remember when I was 12 years old, still in my junior high uniform, holding a motorcycle gear and using it to smash someone's head open during a fight with a rival school. At the time, I felt proud and considered it an achievement. My friends even celebrated with me. In 2011, I thought it was the right thing to do because in Jakarta, tawuran is a culture. It was how we survived and proved ourselves.

Until one night when I was in high school. On a dark highway, our school fought another, but this time, my friends crossed the line and killed someone. Everyone panicked and just left the victim's body on the side of the road. One of my friends had to run, escaping from island to island to avoid the police. Others were thrown in jail.

Ten years later, the same questions keep coming back to me: Why did we do it? Why did we want to hurt each other so badly? I realized that the way we grow up here is broken. As teenagers, we had so much energy, but sadly, we poured all of it into violence.

Schools, which are supposed to be safe spaces to guide our potential, fail to fulfill their role. They only care about grades, not what the student dreams. Feeling ignored and silenced, these teenagers look for another place to be heard. More tragically, the adults who should be protecting them, actually use this for their own gain
.
I am telling this story now because I was one of the lucky ones who got to walk away and ask these questions from a safe distance, camera in hand, instead of a weapon. Through To Live Is to Suffer, I want to show that tawuran isn't just the kids' fault. It's what happens when boys are given no other way to prove they're men, and no one ever asks them to be anything else.

CONTACT

Producer - Hannan Cinthya - hanan@arungifilms.id
Director - Bagas Satrio - bagasatrio97@gmail.com

DIRECTOR BAGAS SATRIO

Born and raised in Jakarta, Bagas had been accustomed to fighting since he was seven years old, a habit that escalated into tawuran (student fight). Everything changed when he found filmmaking, which changed the trajectory of his life. He decided to leave Jakarta behind and move to Yogyakarta to pursue formal film studies at the Jogja Film Academy.

Bagas began his career by directing several short films. In 2025, he completed his debut feature "Blooming", a suspense drama about a student who loses her identity due to her mother's strict rules imposed in the name of her future. The film was developed through the Jogja Film Academy Talent Project in collaboration with KlikFilm, an Indonesian streaming platform focused on curated films from major festival.

Currently, Bagas is developing his second feature film "To Live is to Suffer". The story of a student who loses his education subsidy and makes a betting ring for student fighting, only to be exploited by a candidate for governor.

PRODUCER HANNAN CINTHYA

Hannan began her producing career in 2014 while still a film student. Her debut short film, IRIS (2014), gained wide recognition, screening at prestigious international and local platforms including the Beijing International Film Festival, Singapore International Film Festival, Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival (JAFF), and Apresiasi Film Indonesia. Driven by a deep passion for impactful storytelling, she followed this success with Simbiosis (2015), which continued her festival circuit run with selections at the Festival Film Indonesia (FFI). Dedicated to championing fresh voices, Hannan has consistently collaborated with emerging directors to produce compelling short narratives. She has also successfully expanded her reach to digital audiences; her shorts Kita Tak Bisa Kemana-Mana Lagi (2021) and Tentang Yang Disimpan dan Perlahan Dilupakan (2022) independently accumulated over 500,000 views on YouTube. Most recently, Hannan completed four new short films, including a collaborative project under the Next Step Studio Indonesia initiative, which marked its world premiere at the prestigious Semaine de la Critique 2026. Throughout her journey, Hannan's work has consistently explored the intricate themes of power, trauma, and complex family dynamics. Motifs deeply rooted in her personal worldview. She strongly believes that films with distinctive narratives, urgent social issues, and visceral emotional connections have the power to resonate globally and leave a lasting cultural footprint. Currently, Hannan is channeling this vision into the development of her highly anticipated debut feature film, PingPong and To Live is to Suffer

2026 PaS Workshop
ASEAN · Bangkok, Thailand

THE RAT'S WEDDING
ĐÁM CƯỚI CHUỘT

VIETNAM

MAIN DATA

Category	Dark Comedy, Drama
Length	120 min
Language	English, Vietnamese
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Vietnam
Shooting dates	Nov-Dec 2027
Expected date of completion	Nov 2028
Stage of production	Script development

PRODUCTION

Budget	600,000 €
Financing in place	96,000 €
Production companies	Genesi Creative
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	/

SYNOPSIS

Mike is an alcoholic white scammer/expat in Vietnam who relies on his skin color to play fake corporate big shot, while The Girl is an overworked local factory worker living with a drunk father. They meet when Mike travels to the Girl's factory while pretending to be a Environment Waste Expert.

Infatuate with her, Mike tracks her down, impressing her alcoholic father with his fake title and an American Dream, leading the father to push her to seduce him.

They meet at night in the empty factory; amidst vast machinery, a drunken Mike confesses in English that he is a Eastern European fraud, while The Girl shares her dreams & life in Vietnamese, the conversation flow smoothly even though they don't understand each other. Their bond continue to develops, transcends language barriers, physical desires, and even love itself: they find a deep, genuine human connection in sharing their lives.

As the factory poisoning is exposed, Mike flees to the city while the Girl's home life collapses.. She takes a bus to find him, spots him flirting with another girl in the backpacker district, and returns home to jump into the river, nonchalantly swimming through the toxic waste.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Self-destruction is a strange thing. I used to be an alcoholic, pushing my limits and testing how much my body can take. I still don't know why. You test yourself to the edge while secretly hoping someone will step in and save you. Mike and The Girl, they hope for the same thing that I did.

In his surrender, Mike finds an unexpected anchor —not just through another person, but through a rediscovered sense of self, not just a piece of skin color.

Their Girl's search for identity is real. Even though she is more capable than those around her, including Mike, her struggle to be somebody turns into a deliberate illusion.

The film treats this bond not as a traditional romance, but as a simple human connection— giving the characters a fragile space to breathe, talk, and live freely. The background system focuses entirely on money, wrapped in corruption and bribery. These elements are handled with dark, satirical humor, mixed with local flavors like heavy drinking sessions, late-night karaoke, and the Vina-house vibe.

CONTACT

Producers – Nhat Tien - nhattien@genesicreative.com & Tran Thanh Huy - tranthanhhuy@genesicreative.com
Director - Nguyen Trung Nghia - nghia.t.nguyen17@gmail.com

DIRECTOR NGUYEN TRUNG NGHIA

Nghia is a self-taught filmmaker, based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. He worked in various production roles before directed his first short film in 2021.
His lastest short film, MULBERRY FIELDS, premiered at the Director Fortnight, Festival de Cannes in 2024.

PRODUCER NHAT TIEN

Nhat Tien is a film producer based in Vietnam, she served as the Producer of ROM which won the prestigious "New Currents" Award at the 24th BIFF and several short films which were selected for Film Festivals. In 2022, she was named in the list of Forbes U30 Vietnam.

PRODUCER TRAN THANH HUY

Tran Thanh Huy is a film Producer - Director known for his raw, gritty, and powerful storytelling style. His works carry a distinctive atmosphere, deeply rooted in contemporary Vietnamese life, exploring hidden corners of society and the complexities of human emotion.

2026 PaS Workshop
ASEAN · Bangkok, Thailand

THE RIVER KNOWS OUR NAMES
CÓ DÒNG SÔNG BIẾT

VIETNAM

MAIN DATA

Category	Drama
Length	100 min
Language	Vietnamese, Khmer
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Vietnam
Shooting dates	March-April 2028
Expected date of completion	Dec 2028
Stage of production	Mid-development

PRODUCTION

Budget	536,000 €
Financing in place	70,000 €
Production companies	Mayba Productions, Daluyong Studios
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	La Fabrique Cinéma, Red Sea Development Fund, Talents Tokyo Next Masters Support, QCinema Project Market's Award

SYNOPSIS

In a stateless floating settlement on the Mekong River, nine-year-old Gấm discovers that "land children" have birthday parties. She wants one. But no one in this community has had one. Despite everyone's doubt, including her parents, only Tha, Gấm's elderly neighbor and best friend, backs her. Yet, in the meantime, Tha is secretly preparing to leave the river for land. The changing river no longer holds her aging body kindly.
When the truth comes out, Gấm feels betrayed. She uninvites Tha, but the party still stands. A storm rolls in on the day. Tha comes back anyway, gift in hand, and drowns retrieving it. The community cannot agree how to bury her: no one knows if she was Khmer or Vietnamese, and her incomplete papers offer no solution. The wake becomes the birthday neither of them ever had.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I grew up by the sea, but once stepped into a blue hole and nearly drowned. That day I learned water doesn't only give. It also takes. Since then my bond with it has been complicated: fascination bound to fear. I see in water both the power to cradle life and the power to claim it, and in riverine people the will to live, endure, and resist.
In the early '90s, after Vietnam opened its borders, my father lost his job and my parents' marriage crumbled under economic pressure. While my extroverted sister found her world outside, I spent my time hoping to fix their relationship. Once, I rode my bicycle in the rain to buy my mother a birthday cake, stole candles from the altar for the dead, and begged my father to come home. We never discussed these gestures. At eighteen, I left town. They were still arguing over nothing and everything.
That is why I place a little girl as the hero of this story. I could not do what I hoped Gam would be able to do. I place my faith in a child's capacity for joy, wonder, and love to bring light to the darkest moments.
Gam is inspired by children I met in 2014 in Long Xuyen, near the Vietnam-Cambodia border. Born to parents rendered stateless by regional conflicts, these children had no legal papers, address, or full name—meaning no rights, no protection, no place to belong. But they were dazzling, hilarious, brave, and wise beyond their years.

CONTACT

Producer – Thy Trang - thynguyen1906@gmail.com

Director - Mai Huyen Chi - chichan313@gmail.com

DIRECTOR MAI HUYEN CHI

Mai Huyen Chi is a Vietnamese writer-director whose films explore memory, identity, and belonging, centering voices often overlooked in dominant narratives. She approaches filmmaking as an act of care, using participatory methods that invite communities to shape their own stories.
Her short documentary DOWN THE STREAM (2015), filmed in a floating village near the Vietnam-Cambodia border, was a Vimeo Best of the Year finalist and screened at Winterthur. She co-wrote and co-directed THE GIRL FROM DAK LAK (2022), nominated for the Silvestre Award at IndieLisboa. Her fiction debut THE RIVER RUNS STILL was selected for the 2024 New York Asian Film Festival. Her latest documentary, 50 YEARS OF FORGETTING, commissioned by Al Jazeera in 2025, reached 100,000 views within ten days of release.
She is the founder of Cinema CNN (Cinema of Peasants), a grassroots screening program fostering independent cinema and critical conversations in Vietnam.
She is currently developing her debut fiction feature THE RIVER KNOWS OUR NAMES, winner of the 2024 Talents Tokyo Award and recipient of Talents Tokyo's Next Masters Support.

PRODUCER THY TRANG

Thy Trang is a Vietnamese producer working across fiction, documentary, experimental film, and theater. After five years in the commercial industry, she turned to independent filmmaking, developing her practice through international programs including La Fabrique Cinéma, Produire au Sud ASEAN, IDFA Project Space, IDFAcademy, and Docs By The Sea. In 2024, she founded MAYBA Productions to champion stories by women and underrepresented communities. Her recent credits include The River Runs Still (New York Asian Film Festival, 2025) and 50 Years of Forgetting (Al Jazeera, 2025), which received a Bronze Award at the New York Festivals TV & Film Awards. She is currently producing Mai Huyen Chi's debut feature, The River Knows Our Names. The project has received the Talents Tokyo Award, Talents Tokyo Next Masters Development Support, the Red Sea Development Fund, and QCinema's Project Market Pitch Award, and was selected for La Fabrique Cinéma at Cannes and Produire au Sud ASEAN in 2026. She is also the co-founder of the Gai Te (terrible women) Screenwriting Residency, Vietnam's first feature-film development programme dedicated to FLINTA filmmakers, supported by Purin Pictures.

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2026 PaS Workshop
ASEAN · Bangkok, Thailand

WHAT TO WEAR FOR YOUR OWN FUNERAL?
JUAL PERLENGKAPAN MAYAT

INDONESIA

MAIN DATA

Category	Dark Comedy
Length	100 min
Language	Indonesian (Palopo dialect)
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Indonesia
Shooting dates	2029
Expected date of completion	2030
Stage of production	In development

PRODUCTION

Budget	650,000 €
Financing in place	75,000 €
Production companies	Ujung Pandang Studios
Workshops & platforms attended/Grants obtained	Makassar Film Lab 2024, Jakarta Film Week Producer's Lab 2025, Indonesia France Film Lab 2025-2026

SYNOPSIS

Nurhayati runs a small village funeral shop left by her late son, Ilham. While she preserves it out of grief, her dressmaker daughter-in-law, Aisyah, dreams of moving to the city for her son, Danu. Aisyah secretly sparks a viral business by creating custom, decorative shrouds, which Nurhayati accepts to fund her Hajj pilgrimage.
However, Nurhayati's ambitious nephew, Salman, aggressively modernizes the shop into an international online business, erasing Ilham's memory and entangling the family in debt and lawsuits before abandoning them. Supported by the grateful community, Nurhayati and Aisyah reconcile at Ilham's grave. They reject commercialism, strip away the modern changes, and restore the shop's local purpose. Nurhayati finally leaves for Hajj, leaving Aisyah and Danu embraced in a hopeful future focused on life rather than death.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When Haediqal first shared this story with me, it felt personal. Growing up away from Sulawesi put me in this strange gray area of being emotionally tied to home but also living very far away from it. This film sits in that same tension. Last year I lost my grandfather while I was in university, 10,000 miles away, listening to my family grieve over the phone. I made jokes to soften what I couldn't say and worked so I wouldn't have to feel it. That is exactly how this family behaves, and it is why the film is a comedy.
Nurhayati and Aisyah stop speaking early; everything they need to tell each other goes through twelve-year-old Danu, the only one in the house without a mind of his own. Then Salman comes; I want the audience to like him. He doesn't do anything evil. He gives Nurhayati a son who answers back, and she says yes to him the way you say yes to someone you miss. Nobody catches him; there is nothing to catch. They simply stop entertaining his ideas, and it hurts him more than getting caught would have.
I know these women. Their quiet frustrations, the resilience, the stubbornness, and bitterness. It's the distance that lets me see it clearly and the belonging that lets me film it without condescension. This is a world I know well, and I'm ready to give it the honesty, humour, and heart it deserves.

"What to Wear for Your Own Funeral."

CONTACT

Producer - Rania Sulfa - raniasulfa@ujungpandangstudios.com
Director - Trinisha Aksa - trinishaaksa@ujungpandangstudios.com
Writer & Co-producer - Haediqal Pawennei - diqal@live.com

DIRECTOR TRINISHA AKSA

Trinisha Erwin Aksa is a writer and director from Makassar, Indonesia, whose work explores the quiet complexities of human emotion through an empathetic, introspective lens. Raised in Jakarta, she draws rom her multicultural background to craft stories that feel personal yet universally resonant, often working in the space between what people say and what they actually feel.
Her filmmaking journey began with PASSING TIME, made during the Interscholastic Association of Southeast Asian Schools 24-Hour Film Competition, where it became an official selection. She continued honing her voice with LOVE, OR THE LACK THEREOF in 2023, and her latest short, WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW?, is currently in submission for its first festival run.
Across all her films, Trinisha builds on her interest in emotional intimacy, cultural memory, and the unspoken truths people carry. Her work has gained attention for its honesty and sharp satirical dialogue. She aims to give voice to characters who struggle to express their inner worlds, inviting audiences into the quiet spaces where vulnerability becomes a form of connection.

PRODUCER RANIA SULFA

Rania Sulfa is a Makassar-born producer whose work spans films and series across Indonesia, Singapore, Taiwan, and the United States. Her portfolio includes WARPATH, the upcoming blockbuster starring Iko Uwais and Scott Adkins, where she served as co-producer, alongside regional hits such as LOSMEN MELATI (box office theatrical release, now on Netflix), HUNGRY SOULS (CJ Entertainment and Zhao Wei Films), TIRA (Disney), and OPERANDI GERHANA (Netflix). She has also produced unscripted formats for AXN Asia, commercial work for Apple, and over 25 award-winning short films, music videos, and commercials early in her career.

WRITER & CO-PRODUCER HAEDIQAL PAWENNEI

Haediqal is a Makassar-based screenwriter, line producer, and assistant director. Starting in 2018 with JALANGKOTE RASA KEJU as assistant director, he has helped produced as line producers in hit web series TERIMA KOST PUTRI, and short films such as BASRI AND SALMA IN A NEVER-ENDING COMEDY, KITA USAHAKAN RUMAH ITU, and WE.