

THE BOY AND THE FIGHT OF SPIDERS

(DIWALWAL) PHILIPPINES

MAIN DATA

Category	Coming of age drama
Length	105 minutes
Language	Bisaya
Shooting format	Digital 4K
Shooting location	Philippines
Shooting dates	February-April 2023
Expected date of completion	October 2023
Stage of production	In Development

PRODUCTION

Budget	378.000 €
Financing in place	28.000 €
Production company	Los Otros
Workshop & platform attended	Busan Asian Film School
South Korea Southern Voices Lab, Philippines	

SYNOPSIS

In Southern Philippines, a carefree, spider-obsessed young boy Jun, (12) is living in a remote mining community – Mt. Diwalwal. All he cares about is catching the toughest and biggest spider in the forest to show off to his friends on their routine spider derby. He is too young to notice the changes happening around him caused by the big mining companies. His life changes when he loses his older brother and father in a tunnel collapse. He is forced to grow up to look for their bodies in the rubble, only to dig up a web of lies sewn together by the powers-that-be, making him realize that it takes more than a hero's ransom to extricate his family from the town and its ever-collapsing tunnels.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I was 5 years old when my older brother died from a stray bullet. I remember him vaguely from times we spent playing. I couldn't understand why he was not in the house anymore. Growing up, I was not mindful of that experience until I met, Jun (12) in 2016 in a mining town at Mt. Diwalwal in Mindanao.

Jun's brother and father died in a tunnel collapse and the bodies were never recovered. He faced challenges that left him no choice but to be tough. The tragedy greatly affected him and his family. I saw his life as akin to mining – it's extractive. As minerals were removed due to mining, Jun's childhood was "extracted" early on.

I'd like to probe into the lack of choices and how it affects us and those closest to us. This film is a recuperative process for me as I reconnect with memories of my brother and ease my childhood loss. As I write the story, I am also writing a love letter to my brother. I want this film to be my tender letter to him and my raging letter to the world.

CONTACT

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Producer - John Torres - johnotros@gmail.com

Director - Jarell Serencio - serencio.jarell@gmail.com



DIRECTOR JARELL SERENCIO



Jarell Mahinay Serencio is an emerging filmmaker from Southern Philippines, Davao. His films explore the lives of people from the region living in the margins of society. Victor (2012), Stars in the City (2016) and City of Gold (2018) were his short films that earned Best Short Feature and

Best Director award in Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival, Metro Manila Film Festival and FAMAS awards. Jarell was a fellow of Busan Asian Film School (AFIS) in 2018. He is currently developing his debut feature, The Boy and the Fight of Spiders (Diwalwal) under Los Otros. It received the project and script development award from the Film Development Council of the Philippines, Southern Voices Film Lab 2021. His film project is also selected in the 20th Nantes Produire Au Sud (PAS) workshop in France. He is set to shoot another short film funded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.



PRODUCER JOHN TORRES

John Torres is an independent filmmaker, musician and writer. He co-runs Los Otros, a Manila-based space, film lab, and platform committed to the intersections of film and art, with a focus on process over product. He directed and produced five feature films, including Todo Todo Teros (Dragons & Tigers Award, Vancouver IFF 2006), Years When I was a Child Outside (Berlinale Forum Expanded 2008), and Lukas The Strange (Art of the Real, Film at Lincoln Center, 2013). He produced Shireen Seno's Nervous Translation (NETPAC award, Tiger Competition, Rotterdam 2018), which was developed through Venice's Biennale College Cinema, Bangkok Produire au Sud, IFP, and Cinemart. A special focus of his works was shown at the Viennale in 2013.

PRODUCER ALEX POBLETE



Alex Poblete is an independent film and video producer. Her body of work includes The Ebb of Forgetting (Pardi Di Domani, 68th Locarno International Film Festival); Dayang Asu (ASEAN International Film Festival & Awards 2017); and The Sweet Taste of Salted Bread and Undies (Belize IFF 2019

& Calella FF 2020). She has participated in various labs and workshops for projects she is working on, both fiction and documentary. Currently she is working under Los Otros, a critically-acclaimed film and video studio & platform dedicated to supporting works with unique personal voices, together with John Torres for Jarell Serencio's debut feature film project, The Boy and The Fight of Spiders (Diwalwal). Aside from filmmaking, she also works as a Program Director for Active Vista Center, an education center for human rights in the Philippines.