

Synopsis:

The Philippines is visited by an average of twenty to twenty eight strong typhoons and storms every year. It is the most storm-battered country in the world. Last year, Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), considered the strongest storm in history, struck the Philippines, leaving in its path apocalyptic devastation

Year: 2014**Original title: Mga Anak ng Unos, Unang Aklat****English title: Storm Children, Book 1****Production: sine olivia pilipinas/DMZ Docs****Running time: 143 minutes****Director, Editor, Cinematographer: Lav Diaz****Staff: Sultan Diaz, Hazel Orencio, Liryc Dela Cruz**

Storm Children, Book One

lav diaz

Director's Statement:

It's a fact, and a truth: Filipinos are the most storm-ravaged inhabitants of this Earth. Count twenty to twenty eight typhoons every year; and these are very strong typhoons. One of the very recent ones alone is a classic case. November of 2013, Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan). It is the strongest storm, the most destructive yet, in man's history.

Let's recap again the magnitude of destruction wrought by "Yolanda" last year: According to data from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, the supertyphoon left 6,293 dead, 1,061 missing and 28,689 injured, 1,140,332 houses destroyed or partially damaged, 13 million coconut trees felled, P19.6 billion worth of infrastructure damaged, and some 200,000 families forced to live in tents or temporary bunkhouses. (Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 2, 2014)

Nature's cruelty to the Filipino is quite contradictory as we also have an abundance of blessings from it. Nature is a great provider to us. Magellan's chronicler, Pigafetta, wrote in his diary that the Malay (Filipinos are of the Malay race) could live thousands of years without working because there is too much provision from nature. Nature's pampering could be the reason for the Filipino's indolence.

And if I may dwell on the figurative side of storms battering the Filipino, the psyche comes into the fore. The worst storms, man-made storms, become evil batterers of the Malay soul--think of the long years of Spanish and American colonization, the Japanese Occupation of World War II and the brutal Martial Law years of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Institutionalized corruption in our system and culture bleeds the Malay Filipino. This is the most relentless storm.

The impetus for this work, right at the start, is the idea of the storm in man's soul in general, not just the Filipino psyche. I just started shooting, unmindful of a structure or form or an outline. The last nine months, I visited and stayed in places/islands where the 'areas of responsibility' (weather bureau jargon) of typhoons took place. I was just documenting/chronicling things, finding a thread, searching for the/a story. When I finally sat down to check, brave and confront the onslaught of the initial footages, literally hundreds and hundreds of images that run the gamut from the harrowing to the majestic, from the deeply depressing to the hopeful ones, from the terror and turmoil to innocence, I realized that beyond the fixture of destruction, devastation, disarray and displacement, there is also the fixture of the image of the lost child. Yes, it's them, the children, they are the greatest victims.

This is the initial foray, the First Book, so to speak, for yet another continuum in my filmmaking process. There will be more books.

LAV DIAZ



Biography (Writer, Director)

Lavrente Indico Diaz aka Lav Diaz is a filmmaker from the Philippines who was born on December 30, 1958 and raised in Cotabato, Mindanao. He works as director, writer, producer, editor, cinematographer, poet, composer, production designer and actor all at once. He is especially notable for the length of his films, some of which run for up to eleven hours. That is because his films are not governed by time but by space and nature. His films are about the social and political struggles of his motherland and through these, he has garnered the admiration of the international festival circuit.

Since 1998 he has directed twelve films, and won several international awards. His 2002 film *Batang West Side* won Best Picture at the Singapore International Film Festival, plus awards at the Independent Film Festival of Brussels, Gawad Urian, and Cinemania International Film Festival. He also received a Gawad Urian for his 2005 film *Evolution of a Filipino Family* and Special Jury Prize at the Fribourg International Film Festival in 2006 for *Heremias, Book One*. His film *Death in the Land of Encantos*, was the closing film of the Orizzonti section of the Venice Film Festival 2007, and was awarded a Golden Lion Special Mention. His 2008 eight-hour film *Melancholia*, a story about victims of summary executions, won the Orizzonti Grand Prize at the 65th Venice International Film Festival in 2008, and *Florentina Hubaldo, CTE* has received Best Film at Images Festival, Toronto and Jeonju International Film Festival in 2012. In 2010 he received a Guggenheim Fellowship and in 2011 joined the Board of Directors for Cine Foundation International. The Venice Film Festival calls him "the ideological father of the New Philippine Cinema". In 2013, his latest film *Norte, The End of History* is presented at Un Certain regard Cannes Film Festival and considered as "one of the most beautiful film seen in Cannes" (Jacques Mandelbaum, Le Monde) or even "quite possibly the best film there" (Daniel Kasman, Mubi), a "superb piece of focused narrative" (Jonathan Romney, Screen) –a broadened international recognition that earns him to be invited at FID Marseille to be part of the Official Competition Jury and eventually at the 2013 Locarno Film Festival as the President of the Jury.

Filmography

- 1998 **Criminal of Barrio Concepcion** (Serafin Geronimo: Kriminal ng Barrio Concepcion)
132 min / color
Film Development Council Screenwriting Award 1997 (screenplay)
Urian Awardee [Best Actor (Raymond Bagatsing)], Philippines
Toronto International Film Festival
Chicago International Film Festival (Fipresci)
Pusan International Film Festival
Festival Paris Cinema
- 1999 **Burger Boys**
103 min / color
- 1999 **Naked Under The Moon** (Hubad sa Ilalim ng Buwan)
110 min / color
Silver Screen Award Nominee (Best Asian Feature Film)
Berlin International Film Festival
Singapore International Film Festival
Cinemanila Film Festival, Philippines
- 2002 **West Side Kid** (Batang West Side)
315 min / b&w and color
Star Awards [Best Supporting Actress (Gloria Diaz), Best Cinematography], Philippines
Brussels Film du Independent Awardee [Best Picture, Best Actors (Joel Torre and Yul Servo)]
Silver Screen Awardee (Best Asian Feature Film, Singapore International Film Festival)
Gawad Urian Awardee Best Picture, Best Direction, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography,
Best Actor (Joel Torre), Best Supporting Actor (Raul Arellano), Best Supporting Actress (Gloria Diaz),
Best Production Design, Best Music, Best Sound], Philippines
Netpac Awardee [Cinemanila International Film Festival, Best Acting Ensemble (Joel Torre, Yul Servo, Art Acuna, Ruben Tizon)], Philippines
Hong Kong International Film Festival
Karlovy Vary International Film Festival
New York Asian American International Film Festival
Raindance Film Festival
Hawaii Film Festival
- 2002 **Jesus, Revolutionary** (Hesus Rebolusyunaryo)
112min / color
CPHDOX Festival

- 2004 **Evolution of a Filipino Family** (Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino)
343 min / b&w
Gawad Urian Awardee (Best Picture, Best Screenplay, Best Production Design)
Toronto International Film Festival
International Film Festival Rotterdam
San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival
Hong Kong International Film Festival
Singapore International Film Festival
Vienna International Film Festival
Mar Del Plata Film Festival
Cinemanila International Film Festival
- 2006 **Heremias, Book One: The Legend of the Lizard Princess** (Heremias, Unang Aklat: Ang Alamat ng Prinsesang Bayawak)
540 min / color
Grand Prix Nominee (Fribourg International Film Festival)
Special Jury Prize Awardee (Fribourg International Film Festival)
Cinemanila International Film Festival
- 2007 **Death in the Land of Encantos** (Kagadanan Sa Banwaan Ning Mga Engkanto)
330 min / b&w
Venice Horizons Special Mention Award, Venice Film Festival 2007
Young Critics Circle Awardee (Best Achievement in Cinematography and Visual Design)
Silver Hanoman (Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival)
NETPAC Prize, Best Asian Feature (Jogja-NETPAC Asian Film Festival)
Toronto International Film Festival
Ljubljana International Film Festival
International Film Festival Rotterdam
Singapore International Film Festival
- 2008 **Melancholia**
480 min / b&w
Orizzonti Grand Prize, Venice Film Festival 2008
Sao Paulo International Film Festival
International Film Festival Rotterdam
Cinemanila International Film Festival, Philippines
Buenos Aires International Festival of Independent Cinema
Cinematheque Ontario
Thessaloniki International Film Festival
Festiwal Filmowy Swiata ale kino!
Jeonju International Film Festival
- 2011 **Woman of The Wind** (Babae ng Hangin)
120 min / b&w

2011 **Century of Birthing**

360 min / b&w

Grand Jury Prize, Cinemania International Film Festival 2011, Philippines

Venice Film Festival

Toronto International Film Festival

International Film Festival Rotterdam

Jeonju International Film Festival

New Horizons Film Festival

2012 **Florentina Hubaldo, CTE**

360 min / b&w

NETPAC Prize (Best Asian Film), Jeonju International Film Festival 2012

On Screen Award (Best Film, International Competition), The Images Festival 2012, Toronto

International Film Festival Rotterdam

Edinburgh Film Festival

New Horizons Film Festival

Cinemania International Film Festival

2013 **Norte, The End of History** (Norte, hangganan ng kasaysayan)

250 min / color

Un Certain Regard, Cannes International Film Festival 2013

FID Marseille 2013

Karlovy Vary International Film Festival 2013

Sao Paulo International Film Festival 2013