

Expressing gay sexuality in the digital age: A Philippine cinema example



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History of Cinema in the Philippines

Cinema was brought to the Philippines by two Spanish gentlemen in 1897

It was an instant success with the masses.

“Dalagang Bukid” or The Country Maiden (1919) was the first Filipino movie ever produced and it directed by Jose Nepomuceno considered as the “Father of Philippine Cinema”



Lifted from TUKLAS SINING
EARLY SILENT. *La Mujer Filipina*, 1927, was one of the first silent movies produced by Jose Nepomuceno.

The 50's were considered as the 'Golden Age' of Philippine Cinema
Local movie production houses copied Hollywood-style studio operations including the star system (stable of contracted and exclusive actors and actresses)



STUDIO SHOOT. The era of silent movies in the country covered the years 1912 to 1932. With the advent of the talking pictures, movie studios were established with their own stable of stars, artists and technicians working in a physical plant that was used as a base for all phases of production activities. Sampaguita Pictures, Inc., was established in 1937, was one of the early movie studios. Photo shows a dramatic domestic scene being shot in the studio, ca. 1940

The 60's marked a decline in originality.
Hollywood film copycats became the norm.
The studio system was in decline.



James Bond 007

Tony Falcon, Agent X-44

In 1972, martial law was declared in the Philippines.

It “stimulated the creative minds of film artists to produce great works in an effort to spite the tyrant” (Reyes, 1989, p. 80).

Socially conscious directors such as Lino Brocka and Ishmael Bernal created some of their best works during this period.



Lino Brocka



In the 80's, the New Cinema filmmakers emerged. Like their predecessors:

New filmmakers suffered the arbitrariness of Marcos' Censors board and later, the Aquino government.

They competed with formulaic films popular with the masses.

They had to rise above Hollywood films that were (and still are) imported into the country in great number.

The rise of the BAKYA (wooden clogs) crowd

Market sellers and poor folk would come to the cinema after a hard day's work and the loud sound of their wooden clogs on the cinema floor signaled a box-office hit.

- Bakya was description of the style and sensibility of popular culture and embodied what was “cheap, gauche, naïve, provincial, and terribly popular” (Lacaba, 1983, p. 117)



Himala (Miracle), 1982

Early Philippine films depicting homosexuality

- Parody
- Comedy
- Object of ridicule

Kumander Gringa (1987)
Binibining Tsu-perman (1987)
Hee-Man: Master of None (1985)
Charot (1984)

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The 1990's saw the ratification by the Philippine government of the General Agreement of Tariff and Trade (GATT) and its membership in the World Trade organization (WTO).

- rapid technological growth
- Importation of cheap computers
- Introduction of new video technology

Popularly known as “DV technology,” “Digi-video,” “DVD,” and “mini-DV,” digital video is a relatively inexpensive format.

- finer picture resolution

- a full movie can be saved onto a single disc

- DV technology in the form of digital cameras was introduced in 2004

Instant hit among students and young filmmakers.

Problems of Philippine cinema:

- Declining movie house attendance
- Onerous government taxes (highest taxed film industry in the world)
- Film piracy
- Importation of Hollywood films
- Declining quality of local films
- Other entertainment options

The Filipino indie filmmaker's work evolved from mere technique (use of film language, content, etc.) to a discourse on the way Filipinos look at, interpret and represent their realities.

The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros

Director: Auraeus Solito

Scriptwriter: Michiko Yamamoto



Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Olveros is a departure from the typical Philippine gay-themed film.

It is a 2005 Filipino coming-of-age film about a gay teen who is torn between loyalty to his drug-peddling family and his love for a young policeman.



Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino

pamantayan	manunuri	filmography	feedback
mga nominado	gabi ng gawad	natatanging gawad	talaan ng gawad



'Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros' is 29th Gawad Urian best picture

THE MANUNURI ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the society of respected film critics, awarded "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" (international title: "The Blossoming of Maximo Oliveros") the best picture award during the 29th Gawad Urian on Aug. 3 at the Henry Lee Irwin of the Ateneo de Manila University.

It was a triumphant night for independent cinema as most of the major winners came from independent features originally filmed in digital video.

"Maximo Oliveros," probably the most awarded Filipino movie of 2005, tells the coming of age of Maximo, a homosexual adolescent in the slums who falls in love with a handsome and honest cop. When the cop goes after his father and siblings who are petty criminals, Maximo is forced into a dilemma.

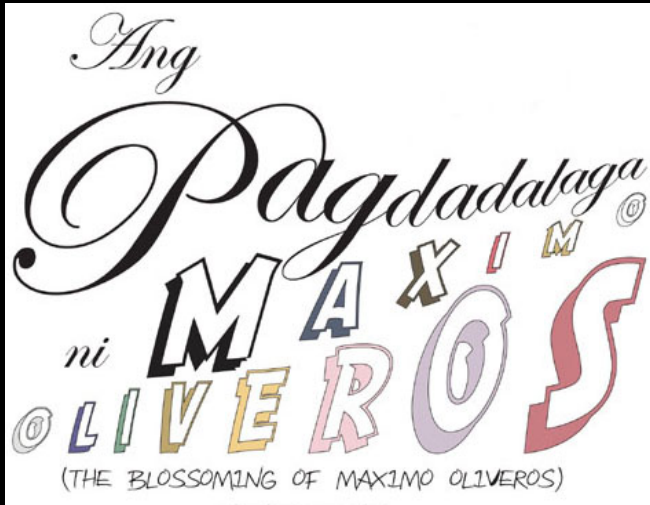




“The movie is a parable on violence. For all his cheerful disposition, both as a child and as somebody with “womanly” instincts, someone who, to apply an ancient haiku, fills an empty rice gourd with a beautiful flower, Maxi cannot avoid the assault of ugliness around him.”

Lito B. Zulueta
Ang Pagdadalaga Ni Maximo Oliveros:
Growing up gay, grim and determined

National and International Awards received



- Best Feature Film, 2006 Berlin International Film Festival (Deutsches Kinderhilfswerk Grand prix)
- Best Feature Film, 2006 Berlin International Film Festival (Glass Bear- Special Mention)
- Best Feature Film, 2006 Berlin International Film Festival
- Best Picture, 29th Gawad Urian Awards 2006
- Best Actor, 2006 Las Palmas Film Festival, Spain (Nathan Lopez)
- Golden Lady Harimaguada award, 2006 Las Palmas Film Festival, Spain
- Best Production Design, 2005 CineMalaya Independent Film Festival (Balanghai Trophy)
- 2005 CineMalaya Independent Film Festival Special Jury prize for Aureus Solito (director),
- Best Picture, 2005 Montreal World Film Festival (Golden Zenith Award)
- Best Picture, 2005 ImagineNative Film Festival in Toronto, Canada
- Best Film, 2005 Asian Festival of 1st Films in Singapore