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## PRESS RELEASE

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In collaboration with the Tribeca Film Institute® (TFI), the Luang Prabang Film Festival (LPFF) held a Talent Lab for Southeast Asian filmmakers during its seventh celebration of regional cinema.

This year's festival took place over the course of six nights and five days last week, 2-7 December 2016. During the festival, the UNESCO World Heritage town of Luang Prabang—which lacks a working cinema—is filled with filmmakers and film industry professionals, and the outdoor nighttime screenings in the town center are packed with moviegoers.

On the second day of the event, TFI's Manager of Artist Programs Bryce Norbitz led the Talent Lab on grant writing and project pitching, with 10 participating film projects from eight ASEAN nations.

Selected from a large pool of applicants, the 10 participating projects in the Talent Lab included:

- *Beastmode*, represented by assistant director/producer Vanessa Amante and writer Mixkaela Villalon (Philippines)
- *Blessed Reunion*, represented by director/screenwriter Lee Thean-jeen (Malaysia)
- *Devoted*, represented by writer/producer Damon Chua (Malaysia)
- *The Doctor*, represented by producer/director Naruemon Chaingam (Thailand)
- *The First Drop of Rain in the Month of May*, represented by producer Sheron Dayoc (Philippines)
- *On the Other Side*, represented by writer/director Anysay Keola (Laos)
- *Return of the Owl*, represented by director/writer Martika Ramirez Escobar (Philippines)
- *The Ring Road*, represented by director/producer Tran Phuong Thao (Vietnam)
- *The Science of Fictions*, represented by director/scriptwriter Yosep Anggi Noen and producer Yulia Evina Bhara (Indonesia)
- *White Building*, represented by director/writer/producer Kavich Neang (Cambodia)

After sessions of instruction, practice, and a pitch forum with feedback given by a jury composed of Jeffrey Calman (Siam Film Associates), Jeremy Sim (Aurora Media Capital), Stephane Lambert (Asian Side of the Doc), Andrew Chin and Choo Mei Lai (HBO Asia), the Philippine documentary project *Beastmode* was selected as the winner. The filmmakers will attend the TFI Network market, which will take place in New York City at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival®. There, TFI will arrange meetings for the filmmakers with editors, distributors, and financiers. TFI will then mentor the *Beastmode* team through the completion of their project.

*Beastmode* is a documentary based on a social experiment revealing a Philippine society and culture that is heavily enthralled with the spectacle of violence. The film follows the altercation between Filipino actors Baron Geisler and Kiko Matos. Secretly crafted as a social media experiment, the actors' quarrel was documented and uploaded on social media, sparking widespread interest among audiences, mass media outlets, and businesses eager to ride on the issue's popularity. In *Beastmode*, this viral event occurs against the backdrop of a changing Filipino culture and society as new president Rodrigo Duterte comes to power with his hardline stance on drugs and criminality. The documentary follows three interconnected narratives: what audiences saw (the viral video and media coverage of the actors' fight), what audiences did not see (how these events were crafted, rehearsed, and orchestrated), and what many choose to look away from (the spate of violent rhetoric and killings fermenting in present-day Filipino society).

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