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Science Film Festival 2017: The past, present and future of humanity

BY TERESITA TANHUECO-TUMAPON ON DECEMBER 22, 2017

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ANALYSIS

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THE K-12 education system which our country adopted in 2015, as we know, consists also of junior and senior high school. The Senior High School covers core curriculum and tracks with alternative programs of study referred to as strands. The STEM strand covers academic programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. STEM is given a boost by the annual international film festival which is usually scheduled beginning in October to December—an initiative of Goethe Institut, the Federal Republic of Germany’s cultural institute promoting the study of German language abroad and encouraging international cultural exchange, which is headquartered in Munich.

Goethe Institut, the organizer. Through the Goethe-Institut Philippinen, one of the 159 institutes all over the world, science-related films sent from around the world also land in the Philippines. This science film festival is said to be the only existing festival of its kind in Southeast Asia, North Africa and the Middle East. Every year, an international and a local jury carefully select the entry films. These are then provided to the venue partners. “Aside from the films, on-the-side activities are offered to the film viewers for enrichment. Science experiments and games are developed specifically for each film and are usually in relation to the theme. The films combine education and entertainment and demonstrates that communicating and learning about science and technology can be a great fun.”

Themes. Since 2009, each year carried a specific theme. In 2015, “the theme coincided with the United Nations’ celebration of the International Year of Light “focusing on the importance of light and how it helps in revolutionizing our global society.” In 2016,Goethe Institut’s

Philippine report had 200,642 viewers all over the Philippines who came to the various venues to watch the films on the theme of Materials Science– understanding “how materials are put together, how they can be used and how they can be

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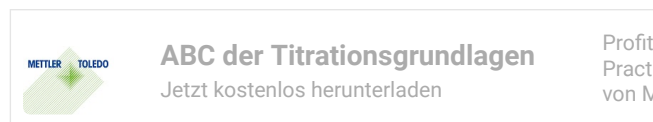
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changed.” This year’s theme is “Anthropocene: Welcome to the Human Age” which “aims to discuss the age of humans and how they have been utilizing and altering the environment to create a new geological era.”

To quote further from the description of the theme provided us: “Industrialization, in particular, has contributed to the unmistakable and often irreversible fingerprint that we are making upon the Earth.”

“Today, the human imprint is so deep and pervasive that scientists, policymakers, and society are considering whether human-caused changes are affecting the geological record over the long term – whether we are, in fact, living in a new geological era called the Anthropocene.”

Goethe Institut Philippinen partners. As main organizer, Goethe Institut collaborates with a set of partners yearly to provide venues for film viewing. These partners include among others the Asean Center for Biodiversity, Department of Education, Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Felta Multimedia Inc., Film Development Council of the Philippines, Manila Ocean Park, Mind Museum, Museo Pambata, Quezon City Science Interactive Center, Philippine National Library, Philippine Science Centrum, Roque Ablan Foundation, the US Embassy, UP Deutscher Verein (German Club), German European School Manila, Leyte Normal University, Liceo de Cagayan University and Xavier University, the Ateneo de Cagayan.



Liceo High as PASCH school: Partner for the future. At Liceo de Cagayan University, which as a partner for the last three years, issues the invitations to public and private schools in all levels (kinder to university) in ROX and provides the venue for simultaneous showing. This year’s festival’s opening program on November 13 had me explain to the senior high students and the rest of the audience what the annual science film festival is about—Liceo U High School’s one of several grand events as a PASCH school, one of three such schools in the country. officially recognized by the Bundesrepublik Deutschlandasa PASCH Schulen der Zufunktandpart of a 1,700 worldwide network of PASCH schools. In the meantime that the collating the 2017 science film festival country report is ongoing, let me share that Liceo’s audience in 2016 had 5,097 viewers; this year there were 7,907. The 2016 Goethe Institut Philippinen’s general country report indicated 200,640 viewers.

Herewith we share our readers viewers’ comments culled from the 2016 country report. The annual festival presents an opportunity to participate in an international initiative to engage the public in SnT, increasing public awareness on emerging issues related to Science. Through use of the visual platform, viewers learn new things, stimulating interest in SnT and generating ideas for science projects. Viewers are encouraged to learn more about science, new discoveries and latest technologies outside the Philippines. The films increase critical thinking skills and contribute to holistic development, inspire viewers to be inventors and scientists, motivate them to replicate what they have seen in the films and to be more mindful of their actions and the impact on the environment. Viewers realize that through the application of science, they can do something to help the country. Information was conveyed in an entertaining manner, portraying science as fun and interesting. Aside from presenting science concepts, the films also feature information related to history, Geography, character development, math, etc. Viewers identify with the characters in the films and who serve as rolemodels (from a report by Marina Kathlyne de Vera).

Increased interest in science was obvious in viewer reflections on the film festival—that science is simple, relevant, appealing, entertaining and of great importance in the lives of people and the planet. We look forward to the 2018 Science Film Festival.



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