

8 Movies We Think You Should Watch at the International Silent Film Festival Manila 2018

BY [FRANCINE DAROY](#) • AUGUST 27, 2018

Ihr Event in
Salzburg

Sie sind auf
dem perfekt
Veranstaltur

Movies have always been a part of our culture. For every milestone, historical event, or scientific discovery, there is always a movie ready to reflect reality from an artistic and sometimes exaggerated standpoint. What if movies did not have language, though? While it is said that language is the medium of conversation, it is also said that images are more powerful than words.

Silent films evoke a feeling of both antiquity and timelessness. Though cinematography was very simple and the concept of “green screen” was unknown then, even a person unfamiliar with silent films can follow the storyline. The pure sincerity of the acting alone is enough to reveal a character's disposition, such as a grimace pertaining to disdain or a grin representing sly joy. Silent films do not need extemporaneous effects to convey a powerful message that will last for centuries, making the experience seem novel though actually vintage.



Starting 2007, Manila has been host to this one of a kind experience of watching silent films produced a century ago. Renowned as the first and the oldest silent film festival in Southeast Asia, the International Silent Film Festival returns to Manila for its 12th installment, this time at SM Megamall. Participated in by eight countries this year – Italy, Philippines, France, Germany, Spain, U.S.A., Austria, and Japan – it is a much-awaited event where different countries are able to share a part of their culture in the early 1900's with Philippine contemporary musical culture.

We let you in on some of the films to watch out for in this year's roster of the 12th International Silent Film Festival.

8 Movies We Think You Should Watch at the International Silent Film Festival Manila 2018

8. Rapsodia Satanica (Satanic Rhapsody – Italy)

Year: 1915-1917

Duration: 41 mins

Director: Nino Oxilia

Genre: Italian Stylish Melodrama; based on a poem by Fausto Maria Martini and inspired by the aesthetic of Gabriele D'Annunzio

Cast: Lyda Borelli, Andrea Habay, Ugo Bazzini, Giovanni Cini



LYDA BORELLI AS DAME ALBA D'OLTREVITA IN THE 1915 RAPSODIA SATANICA

Rapsodia Satanica is a film about an aging Italian aristocrat, Dame Alba d'Oltrevita (Lyda Borelli), who is passionate in finding a second youth until she discovers a particular and special solution for her beauty problems: a pact with the devil. However, as for Faust and for Dame Alba, things don't go as expected.

Rapsodia Satanica is the most important of those stylish melodramas made in Italy in the early silent days for it gave prestige to the unique style of Italy's film productions. It is known for its literary inspirations, its Liberty scenery and indoor settings, and acclaimed for the skilled performance of Lyda Borelli, star of Italian silent cinema.



MUSICAL SCORE BY MILESEXPERIENCE

Accompanying Rapsodia Satanica in the ISFF 2018 is MilesExperience, a band that started out as a blues band in 2011, but delved into a "unique, barely heard of sound in the local music scene" when they revamped their image in 2014.

MilesExperience hails from the UST Conservatory of Music and is currently made up of five members: Miles Bondoc on vocals and guitar, Tim Dadivas on drums, Ian Diaz on bass, Guido Hizon on keyboards, and Justin Teaño on guitar.

Trivia: The original music of Rapsodia Satanica was scored by Pietro Pascani in 1915. The music is very important to the film as it signifies transition in the storyline.

7. This Is Not A Lost Film (varied films – Philippines)

Year: Varied

Duration: 60 mins

Director: Khavn

Film Genre: Found-footage Horror

Music Genre: Ethno-Space Jazz

Cast: Varied

This Is Not A Lost Film features "The Lost Film Trilogy", which is composed of "Filipiniana", "Aswang (1933)", and "Juan Tamad Goes to the Moon (1898)"; plus an excerpt from "Nitrate: To the Ghosts of the 75 Lost Philippine Silent Films (1912-1933)".

Teddy Co, chairman of the National Committee on Cinema (NCCA) and Commissioner for the Arts, has been involved in Philippine cinema in the last four decades as an archivist, festival organizer, juror, and selection committee member in various festivals. He selected the Philippine titles for the International Silent Film Festival from 2011 to 2013. This Is Not A Lost Film represents the problems in Philippine cinema.



FILIPINIANA, THE FIRST FILM TO BE SHOWN IN THE PHILIPPINES' SET OF SILENT FILMS FOR ISFF 2018

"History is a dead cow in a funnel pretending to be a detuned bassoon serenading the moon halved by expectations not so great that new emperors bow their decapitated heads but 3 cakes are always better than 3 cents in this madly turning world pecking pecking ducktards for a midnight snack on the run." (Khavn)



ASWANG, THE 1933 SILENT FILM

The first film made in the Philippines to feature optically recorded sound was George Musser's *Ang Aswang* (The Vampire). In 1932, Musser imported Php 50,000 worth of optical sound equipment and turned his house into a studio. He spent a year shooting the film with Charles Miller as his cinematographer and William Smith as his soundman. Despite its Tagalog title, the film was actually recorded in Spanish and English.



JUAN TAMAD GOES TO THE MOON, THE 1898 FILM

“Three years before George Melies’ “Le Voyage dans la Lune” and ten years before Segundo de Chomon’s “Excursion En La Luna”, indigenous proto-surrealist Philippine filmmaker Narding Salome Exelsio made “Nagtungo si Juan Tamad sa Buwan” in 1898 while the Philippines was being sold by Spain to America for twenty million dollars (VAT not included).” (Khavn)



TE: TO THE



The film is an abstract found-footage horror using nine existing films from 1952 to 1980 to reimagine, reconstruct, simulate, commemorate, and commiserate with the seventy-five lost Philippine silent films from 1912-1933.



KHAVN, THE DIRECTOR AND COMPOSER OF THIS IS NOT A LOST FILM, WHO WILL BE PLAYING ALONGSIDE THE KONTRA-KINO ORCHESTRA

Khavn is a composer, pianist, singer, and songwriter who has made 23 albums. He holds the world record for the longest-ever solo piano concert without breaks for the 13-hour live score of his 13-hour film “Simulacrum Tremendum” in the Rotterdam International Film Festival 2016. He recently won the 2018 Gawad Urian for Best Music for his soundtrack to “Balangiga: Howling Wilderness”. His other bands include The Brockas, Fando & Lis, and Vigo. The Kontra-Kino Orchestra was formed in 2016 as a 33-piece improvisation ensemble conducted by Khavn to create an album of imaginary soundtracks.

6. La Passion de Jeanne D’Arc (France)

Year: 1928

Duration: 81 mins

Director: Carl Theodor Dreyer

Genre: Drama (Themes – Religion, History)

Cast: Renée Jeanne Falconetti, Silvain Eugène Falconetti



1928 LA PASSION DE JEANNE D'ARC, PLAYED BY RENÉE JEANNE FALCONETTI

La Passion de Jeanne D’Arc tells the story of the trial of Joan of Arc in 1431 where she was accused of heresy by ecclesiastical judges determined to make her disclaim her visions, which ended with her being burned at the stake.



La Passion de Jeanne D'Arc's music is scored by Dingdong Fiel, an established and internationally recognized pianist, composer, conductor, musical director, and vocalist. He earned his Bachelor of Music Degree from the UST Conservatory of Music in 2007, and was awarded a full scholarship for post graduate studies at the Franz Liszt Hochschule Fur Musik in Germany immediately after. He started out his music career as a pianist after garnering a total of 5 first Prizes from various international piano competitions, and is also a pianist for various Jazz groups.

In his career as Musical Director, he was involved in various theater productions and concerts such as Repertory Philippines' Manila staging of the musical "No Way to Treat A Lady" (2013), Ryan Cayabyab's Rock Opera "Lorenzo" (2013), the Manila run of "Into the Woods" (2015), and Menotti's thriller opera "The Medium" (2016) to name a few. This is his fifth film entry to the Manila International Silent Film Festival but a first for him to completely notate the music sans improvisations. This year, he will be playing alongside Andrew Constantino on clarinet, and Kyongmin Nam on cello.

5. Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari (The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari – Germany)

Year: 1920

Duration: 77 mins

Director: Robert Wiene

Genre: Horror

Cast: Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Friedrich Feher, Lil Dagover, Hans Twardowski



Dubbed as “the first true horror film”, *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* tells the story of a mad doctor who is being suspected of sending a reawakened corpse on a killing spree. It is later revealed that he is the director of an asylum for the insane, where our protagonist finds out that the doctor has obsessions far darker and more sinister than he had imagined.

Das Cabinet is considered the quintessential work of German expressionist cinema and uses a fantastical and graphic visual style instead of a naturalistic one. The film introduces styles and sets used in today's horror/thriller movies: landscapes that twist in unusual angles, predominantly sharp-pointed forms and silhouettes, contrasts between lights and shadows, the twist ending, and the unreliable narrator to the language of the narrative film.



Playing alongside the film is Kontemporaryong Gamelan Pilipino, known as Kontra-GaPi, an indigenous ensemble founded by Prof. Edru Abraham of the College of Arts and Letters of the University of the Philippines – Diliman. The group strives to express music and kindred arts from indigenous well-springs, ancient and profound sources, and the cultural diversity of the Philippines and her Asian roots. Their music can be described as “magical as the moonlight and constantly changing as the water”.

Read on to know more silent films to watch out for!

[HOME](#)[TRENDING](#)[EAT](#)[ADVENTURE](#)[PARTIES](#)[ART](#)[STYLE](#)[STUFF](#)[INTEREST](#)[ADVOCACIES](#)

+

8 Movies We Think You Should Watch at the International Silent Film Festival Manila 2018

BY [FRANCINE DAROY](#) • AUGUST 27, 2018



4. Tokkan Gozo (A Straightforward Boy – Japan)

Year: 1929

Duration: 19 mins

Director: Yasujiro OZU

Genre: Drama

Cast: Tomio AOKI, Tatsuo SAITO, Takeshi SAKAMOTO



ONE OF THE FAMOUS SCENES AT TOKKAN KOZO (1929)

Tokkan Kozo is the story of a boy named Tetsubo, who is kidnapped by Bunkichi, and has an appetite for sweets. Unable to keep Tetsubo under control, Bunkichi returns him to his boss, who refuses to take him back. He tries to dump him on his playmates, but he incites them to demand toys and other goodies from him.

The original theatrical release of Tokkan Kozo was 38 minutes long, but this was unfortunately lost. A version was discovered in 1988 but this was incomplete due to the degradation of the film reel. The version found in 1988 was 14 minutes long and was shown at the International Silent Film Festival in 2015. Screening this year is the most complete version that was fortunately discovered just three years ago, which is 19 minutes long.

Trivia: Characteristic of Japanese silent films is the presence of a benshi. The benshi provides information alongside the film to the audience to aid in the full appreciation of the silent film. The benshi can be said to act as a sort of "silent narrator" who acts as well, and is oftentimes more remembered than the actual film. This year, the Japan Foundation decided to have a Filipino benshi for the first time, who is no other than Tito Genova Valiente.



TITO GENOVA VALIENTE, THE FILIPINO BENSHI

Tito Genova Valiente is a public anthropologist, film critic, and film educator. He took up his postgraduate studies in Anthropology in Japan and developed a course on Japanese Cinema in the Japanese Studies Program at the Ateneo de Manila University. He is a member of the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the oldest and the most prestigious film critics circle in the country, where he once served as its Chair, and has co-authored books on Japanese cultures in Asia and war memories. In 2015, he was awarded by the Union of Writers of the Philippines the Gawad Balagtas for Achievement in English essay.



MUSICAL SCORE BY TANIKALA TRIBE

To provide the music for Tokkan Kozo and the *benshi* is the Tanikala Tribe, a band hailing from Naga City, Bicol. The name of their band literally translates to “Chain Tribe”, which is a reference for their Contemporary Pop Folk/Ethnic sound. Albeit their distinct sound, the group does not stay away from upbeat music, ballad, and novelties. Their aim is “to spread love of all kind – love of nature, love of country and love of countrymen, and love for all humankind”. Tanikala Tribe is composed of the following members: Wowie Nabua on kubing, flute, kudyapi; Raul Badiola on tambol, chimes, bells; Jojo Peconcillo on acoustic guitar; and Russel Campillos on classical guitar.

3. Our Hospitality (United States of America)

Year: 1923

Duration: 75 mins

Directors: Buster Keaton and John G. Blystone

Genre: Comedy, Romance, Thriller

Cast: Buster Keaton, Natalie Talmadge, Joe Roberts



OUR HOSPITALITY, ONE OF THE WORLD'S FIRST COMEDY FILMS (1923)

Our Hospitality is a film about family feuds, starring and directed by Buster Keaton, one of the greatest US comedians in the silent film era. The film tells the story of a grown Willie who travels back to his family home after having received a letter saying he has inherited his father's estate. On the train, he meets a beautiful young woman and falls in love with her. She invites him to dinner but he eventually realizes that she is the sole daughter of the patriarch Joseph Canfield with whom his family has been engaged in a long violent feud. He notices that the Canfield men won't harm him while he's in their home, so he plans to stay there as a permanent guest until he discovers that the Canfields are already after him.

Trivia: Our Hospitality is a film about family feuds, but in the film, Keaton was acting alongside his actual family. His love interest in the film is his wife, his dad is his actual dad, and his son is his actual son!



Playing alongside the comedic film is the fitting Brass Munkeys, a group known for their lively and bold performances on stage. “Our music has been classified as blues, jump swing, even boogie”, shares the group's drummer and band leader, Jayman Alviar. Jump swing, also known as retro swing, refers to the hyper-intense dance style featuring hopping and kicking. It is an up-tempo combination of rock, blues, and swing. Last year’s silent film festival had the whole theater getting up and dancing on their seats!

2. Frivolinas (Spain)

Year: 1926

Duration: 80 mins

Directors: Arturo Carballo

Genre: Musical Comedy



Cast: Ramper, José López Alonso, Juan Belmonte, María Caballé, Miguel Ligero, Felisa López, Blaca Pozas, Ramón Álvarez Escudero



FRIVOLINAS, A COMBINATION OF A MUSICAL AND DANCE SHOW, IN 1926

Frivolinas tells the story of a widower who loves nightlife and a comedian who falls in love with the old man's daughter. It combines elements of musical and dance shows and was featured at a very popular Madrid theater in the 1920's. It is a film that shows passion through the layers of life, and gives the audience a chance to appreciate Spanish culture and art in the 1920's.



Accompanying Frivolinas is live music by Tapati, a collaboration of artists embracing influences of rock, reggae, blues, jazz, pop, folk, and Philippine Neo-ethnic tribal music. Led by Tapati, a performing artist and singer-songwriter herself, the group brings in the finest leading contemporary world music artists showing an alternative perspective of the Philippine culture.

1. Die Kleine Veronika (Austria)

Year: 1929

Duration: 70 mins

Directors: Robert Land

Genre: Drama

Cast: Käthe von Nagy, Maly Delschaft, Mizzi Zwerenz, Harry Hardt



DIE KLEINE VERONIKA, THE 1929 FILM, FEATURES PLACES STILL FAMOUS TO THIS DAY

Die Kleine Veronika tells the story of Tyrolean mountain girl, Veronika, who travels to Vienna to visit her aunt, only to find out that the city experience she has been dreaming of is not as fun and glamorous as she had imagined. Rediscovered and restored by the Austrian Film Archive, the film is prized for scenes that show the Tyrolean mountains and the still-famous Vienna Prater amusement park in the 1920's.

This year, the Austrian Embassy partners with Hearlife Foundation, Inc., a non-stock, non-profit organization created to champion the Filipino deaf and MED-EL Philippines, affiliate of MED-EL WorldWide, Innsbruck Austria and a cochlear implant provider for 20 years in the Philippines.



MUSICAL SCORE BY JOEE &

The music for Die Kleine Veronika is scored by Joee & I, an avant-pop electronica solo project of Joee Mejias, a musician and a multimedia artist from Manila. Armed with a laptop, kalimba, bells and shakers, and a melodica, everything one would expect from an electronic act is here – looping riffs, unexpected twists and vocals that “stroke, smash, stomp, scream, and kiss”.

The International Silent Film Festival Manila was an initiative started in 2007 by Goethe Institut Philippinen, Japan Foundation – Manila, and Instituto Cervantes to celebrate the culture, history, and art of different countries and how these have contributed to the Philippines’ own culture through silent films. Renowned as the first and the oldest silent film festival in Southeast Asia, the International Silent Film Festival Manila brings together the past and the present by integrating live original music scored by Filipino artists alongside international silent films. Now on its 12th year, the International Silent Film Festival presents eight films from Spain, Japan, Germany, Italy, France, Austria, U.S.A., and our very own, the Philippines. The participating embassies and cultural institutions for this year are: The Film Development Council of the Philippines, Goethe Institut Philippinen, the Philippine-Italian Association, Japan Foundation – Manila, Insituto Cervantes, and the Embassies of the United States of America, Austria, and France.

The 12th International Silent Film Festival Manila runs from August 30 to September 2 at the SM Megamall Cinema 2. All films are of free admission, so don’t miss out on the chance to catch the first films that started it all, with live music sure to be enjoyed by all. (And don’t forget to use #ISFF2018 to spread the word!)

12th International Silent Film Festival Manila

August 30 – September 2, 2018

SM Megamall Cinema 2

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalSilentFilmFestivalManila/>

Event Page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/229835844494805/>

For inquiries, contact Micah Pinto (Festival Coordinator) at +63917 513 6604 or micahsofia.parasasining@gmail.com

#ISFF2018

Pages: [1](#) [2](#)



FRANCINE DAROY

Francine is a 90's kid who loves music, art, poetry, and all things related to the ocean -- with hints of spice and lots of violet in between. Check out what goes on in her head at The Literary Folly (theliteraryfolly.wordpress.com) or @francinelouised

♡ [1](#) LIKES

💬 [1](#) COMMENT

🖨 [PRINT](#)
