

MOVIES

Laos Talent Lab Sends Philippine Musical Comedy-Drama ‘Golden’ to Tribeca

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Courtesy of Luang Prabang Film Festival

Jaime Habac Jr. with TFI's Michelle Hamada

Philippine director Jaime Habac Jr will head to the Tribeca Film Institute's Network market with a project that follows the fortunes of aging gay performers who are booted out of their home.

Filipino director Jaime Habac Jr will be taking the musical comedy-drama *Golden* for further development at next year's edition of the Tribeca Film Institute's Network market.

The news comes at the end of the 2019 Luang Prabang Film Festival (LPFF) Talent Lab, which focused three days on grant writing and project pitching, and was led by the Tribeca Film Institute.

Habac's feature and Malaysian filmmaker Feisal Azizuddin's dark comedy *Angkat* took out the top awards at this year's lab, which was hosted at the northern Laotian city's Avani+ Luang Prabang resort.

Lab organizers said the workshop focused on "the art of the pitch" while also featuring "collaborative pitch training and feedback sessions with industry professionals."

The program's Indochina Productions' Rising Star Award was meanwhile given to Thai producer Ladawan Sondak's documentary *Lady of the Hills*.

Habac's feature follows the fortunes of a group of gay seniors who devise a drag act after being kicked out of their home.

The director will now attend the TFI Network market at the 2020 Tribeca Film Festival (April 15-26, 2020), with TFI mentoring the filmmaker through to the completion of his project.

It's been a big month for the team behind *Golden*, with producer Omar Sortijas having been on hand at Singapore's Southeast Asian Film

Financing Forum to pick up almost \$15,000 in production funds.

Azizuddin will receive \$10,000 in production funds for *Angkat*, described as a film that follows "three brothers with a fractious relationship" as they travel together to return the body of their dead father for burial in their remote village.

The money comes from the Aurora Producing Award, backed by Singapore-based media investment firm Aurora Media Holdings.

Sondak will receive \$1,500 for the production of the documentary *The Lady of the Hills* while award sponsor Indochina Productions will also arrange for a review of the project from a Thai film mentor.

There were six projects in various stages of development selected by LPFF, and they came from four ASEAN countries in Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand. All those involved will now be given preferential consideration for any of TFI's grants as TFI program alumni.