

## **Chicago Filipino American Film Festival Celebrates Its 5th Anniversary By Awarding A CFAFF Veteran**

*By Philippe Franco*

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*The 5th Annual Chicago Filipino American Film Festival holds its first Music Video Awards Ceremony, awarding Bernard Badion, a CFAFF veteran.*

Chicago's own Filipino American Film Festival celebrated its fifth and most successful year to date at the historic Portage Theatre. In addition to the milestone event, director Bernard Badion was awarded the 1st CFAFF Music Video Award for "Slow Machines" by the Gold Medalists. As a bonus to holding the title of "2008 Music Video Award Winner" Bernard was presented with a prize of \$1000.

According to the judges, "the level of competition was very high". The six finalists included Yasmine Gomez, Sigfried Sanchez and Chicago's own Jonald Reyes. One high profile finalist was Ron Irizarry, who won a spot on the soundtrack for the movie "Henry Poole is Here", as well as a video directed by well known music video director Mark Pellington (credits include U2 and Pearl Jam). Badion's LEAVE IT TO CHANCE was a hit with college students after its feature in CFAFF 2005.

Throughout its successful years of showcasing today's up-and-coming Filipino filmmakers, this is the first year the CFAFF has held a Music Video Award. CFAFF recognized that music videos allow both filmmakers and artists to express themselves through their short works.

Since the very first film festival, music videos, including those from judges Patricio Ginelsa and Steve Mallorca, were shown just about every year. John Laxamana agrees, "It's great to see this come full circle".

The judges consisted of a panel of three industry professionals. Steve Mallorca is an award-winning filmmaker and musician who's works include: Slow Jam King, which The New York Times hailed as "Do it yourself filmmaking at its purest" and P.I.C's "Got Me Like" video which was "one of the Top 10 Videos of 2005" (CNET's Download.com). Steve is currently a director at New York-based production company, Woo Art International. Patricio Ginelsa who's probably best known for writing and directing 3 Black Eyed Peas music videos: "THE APL SONG" (2004) and two versions of "BEBOT" (2006). Patricio continues to develop his projects under his production company Kid Heroes Productions and also manages Alica Way Entertainment, which distributes exclusive Filipino American DVD content. Jonathan Laxamana has been the Program Director of the CFAFF since its inception and has served on the Board of Directors of the Filipino American Network (FAN) of Chicago for three years. As a syndicated writer, his film reviews have appeared at Amazon, Blockbuster and the New York Times. He currently works at an educational publishing company, where he has produced over 250 short videos for the secondary educational market.

### About CFAFF

The primary mission of the festival is to highlight and celebrate the works of emerging Filipino-American filmmakers, as well as cutting-edge cinema from the Philippines. CFAFF is presented by the Filipino American Network (FAN) of Chicago, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Previous years have included acclaimed features, such as Cavite, Imelda, Panaghooy Sa Suba (Call of the River), Slow Jam King, Blue Hour, Crying Ladies, Magnifico and Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Olivares.

### About the Filipino American Network (FAN)

The Filipino American Network (FAN) is a not-for-profit organization that calls, challenges and supports Filipino American young adults by providing resources, connections and opportunities to enrich their lives, support their growth and deepen their self-awareness of their Filipino heritage. In addition to the film festival, FAN also hosts the Beyond The Barrelman Exhibition of Filipino Art, a Holiday gift basket drive for seniors and other events serving Chicago's Filipino American community.

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CFAFF's mission is to support and highlight Filipino filmmakers in the U.S., Canada and the Philippines as well as to educate and enrich our Filipino American community.

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