



SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

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Annemarie Jacir, *Wajib*, 2017. Screening at Mirage City Cinema, Sharjah Art Foundation, 2018. Photo: Sharjah Art Foundation

Filmmakers Julian Alexander and Emerson Reyes Awarded Short Film Production Grants by Sharjah Art Foundation

Awardees' Films to be Screened at Sharjah Film Platform in December 2019

Sharjah, United Arab Emirates – Sharjah Art Foundation today announced the winners of the **Short Film Production Grant**, an annual initiative of the **Sharjah Film Platform (SFP)**. Filmmakers **Julian Alexander** (USA) and **Emerson Reyes** (Philippines) will receive between them a total of 30,000 USD to support the creation of original short films, which will be screened at the second edition of SFP in December 2019.

The awardees were selected from a pool of 350 applicants from over 65 countries who answered Sharjah Art Foundation's open call for submissions.

Both awardees have previously presented video work at Sharjah Art Foundation. Julian Alexander's film *Léo* was presented in the inaugural edition of SFP, and Emerson Reyes' work *Farewell to the Skin and the Dead Skin It Lived with* was featured in Sharjah Biennial 11 (2013) as part of a film programme curated by Apichatpong Weerasethakul and programmed by Khavn De La Cruz.

About the Awardees

Julian Alexander is a professor at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, US, where he teaches filmmaking in the Creative Media Institute. He wrote, directed, and starred in a phone-based web series titled *Bad JuJu* (2019) and has directed the short films *Beat Blue* (2018), *What Else* (2016) and *Buffalo* (2014), as well as numerous stage productions as well as dozens of other films.

Emerson Reyes lives and works in Batangas, the Philippines, and has produced, written, and directed multiple short and feature-length films. Reyes was selected for Berlinale Talents 2019, and his second full-length film, *Dormitoryo* (2017), which was shot entirely inside an apartment, won awards in the Qcinema International Film Festival, Quezon City, the Philippines. He produced the experimental documentary *Piding* (2016) for Cinema One Originals and his first feature film, *MNL 143* (2012), which was shot mostly inside a minivan, premiered at the 66th Edinburgh Film Festival.

About the SFP Short Film Production Grant

The Short Film Production Grant is a component of the Sharjah Film Platform (SFP)—an annual Sharjah Art Foundation initiative launched in 2018 as a resource to support filmmaking in the United Arab Emirates and the surrounding region. SFP supports three core components: the curated film programme, whose upcoming edition is set to run 11 to 21 December 2019; a public programme featuring workshops and discussion; and the premieres of the Short Film Production Grant recipients' films. Together, the three-pronged SFP platform continues the foundation's longstanding commitment to film programming, commissions and productions, and to the support of emerging and established filmmakers, film producers, critics and students.

About Sharjah Art Foundation

Sharjah Art Foundation is an advocate, catalyst and producer of contemporary art within the Emirate of Sharjah and the surrounding region, in dialogue with the international arts community. Under the leadership of founder Hoor Al Qasimi, a curator and artist, the foundation advances an experimental and wide-ranging programmatic model that

supports the production and presentation of contemporary art, preserves and celebrates the distinct culture of the region and encourages a shared understanding of the transformational role of art. The foundation's core initiatives include the long-running Sharjah Biennial, featuring contemporary artists from around the world; the annual March Meeting, a convening of international arts professionals and artists; grants and residencies for artists, curators and cultural producers; ambitious and experimental commissions and a range of travelling exhibitions and scholarly publications.

Established in 2009 to expand programmes beyond the Sharjah Biennial, which launched in 1993, the foundation is a critical resource for artists and cultural organisations in the Gulf and a conduit for local, regional and international developments in contemporary art. The foundation's deep commitment to developing and sustaining the cultural life and heritage of Sharjah is reflected through year-round exhibitions, performances, screenings and educational programmes in the city of Sharjah and across the Emirate, often hosted in historic buildings that have been repurposed as cultural and community centres. A growing collection reflects the foundation's support of contemporary artists in the realisation of new work and its recognition of the contributions made by pioneering modern artists from the region and around the world.

Sharjah Art Foundation is a legally independent public body established by Emiri Decree and supported by government funding, grants from national and international nonprofits and cultural organisations, corporate sponsors and individual patrons. All events are free and open to the public.

About Sharjah

Sharjah is the third largest of the seven United Arab Emirates and the only one bridging the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Reflecting the deep commitment to the arts, architectural preservation and cultural education embraced by its ruler, Sheikh Dr Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi. Sharjah is home to more than 20 museums and has long been known as the cultural hub of the United Arab Emirates. In 1998, it was named UNESCO's 'Arab Capital of Culture' and has been designated the UNESCO 'World Book Capital' for the year 2019.

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