

BRILLANTE MA MENDOZA is a living national treasure of Philippine independent cinema. He is one of the most prominent and important Filipino filmmakers today. He is the first Filipino to compete and win in 3 major international film festivals, showing authentic Filipino stories to the world.

His film, *Captive*, competed in coveted **Berlin International Film Festival** in 2012, while *Tirador (Slingshot)* won the Caligari Film Award in 2007 of the same festival.

Thy Womb, on the other hand, won the La Navicella Venezia Cinema Award in the equally prestigious **Venice Film Festival** in 2012, while *Lola* was nominated for the best film screened in competition for the same festival in 2009, also known as the “Golden Lion”.

But his most notable achievement is when he won the elusive Best Director in the well-renowned **Cannes Film Festival** for the film, *Kinatay* in 2009. The year before, his film, *Serbis (Service)* was nominated for the acclaimed “*Palm d’Or Award*” or the “Golden Palm”, the most prestigious award given to the best film of the said film festival.

Known to his peers as Dante, he started as a Production Designer in various films and Television advertisements. In 2005, he founded *Center Stage Productions (CSP)*, an independent film production outfit that aims to rethink and reinvent Filipino cinema by producing meaningful and relevant films. His debut film, *Masahista (The Masseur)* immediately won the Golden Leopard Award in the 2005 Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland and paved the way for the rise of Alternative Cinema in the Philippines.

Since then, Mendoza, together with **CENTER STAGE PRODUCTIONS** has produced a body of work that garnered awards and recognitions from local and international film festivals, including his recent achievement in the Asia-Pacific Screen Awards for *Thy Womb*; Asia-Pacific’s equivalent to the *Oscars*. His works launched a yearly retrospective in Europe, Asia and Russia where the world’s film critics regard him as a “neo-realist” for depicting social realities and lives of ordinary people in extraordinary situations.

Recently, the French government decorated Brillante Ma. Mendoza with the *Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Arts et Lettres* or *Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters*. No Filipino director has been accorded the singular distinction of being ranked with the likes of renowned filmmakers, Bernardo Bertolucci and Dario Argento.

Mendoza’s films are commercially shown in Europe, affording the cinema-loving European audience a glimpse of contemporary Philippine society.

For his achievements and stature in world cinema, various film festivals all over the world have invited Mendoza to sit not only as Jury Member, but as Jury President as well.

Today, Mendoza continues to make socially relevant films and documentaries that depict the lives of the Filipinos and the marginalized sectors of society, cultivating an audience for Alternative Cinema by showing my films in different schools all over the country. One of which is his film, *Manoro*, which is now part of Philippine Department of Education's formal module for Grade 8 students.