



TOP GUN: MAVERICK



TOP ANK

LOGLINE

Discharged from the army due to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Miguel gets embroiled in a different kind of war when a drug peddler seeks his protection against a vigilante death squad, all the while he must confront his own demons in order to earn his redemption.

Genre: Action-Drama-Thriller

Subtitle: English

Country of Origin: Philippines

Runtime (including credits): 01:52:38

Language: Tagalog

Year of Production: 2023

International Sales / Distributor: Raven Banner Entertainment

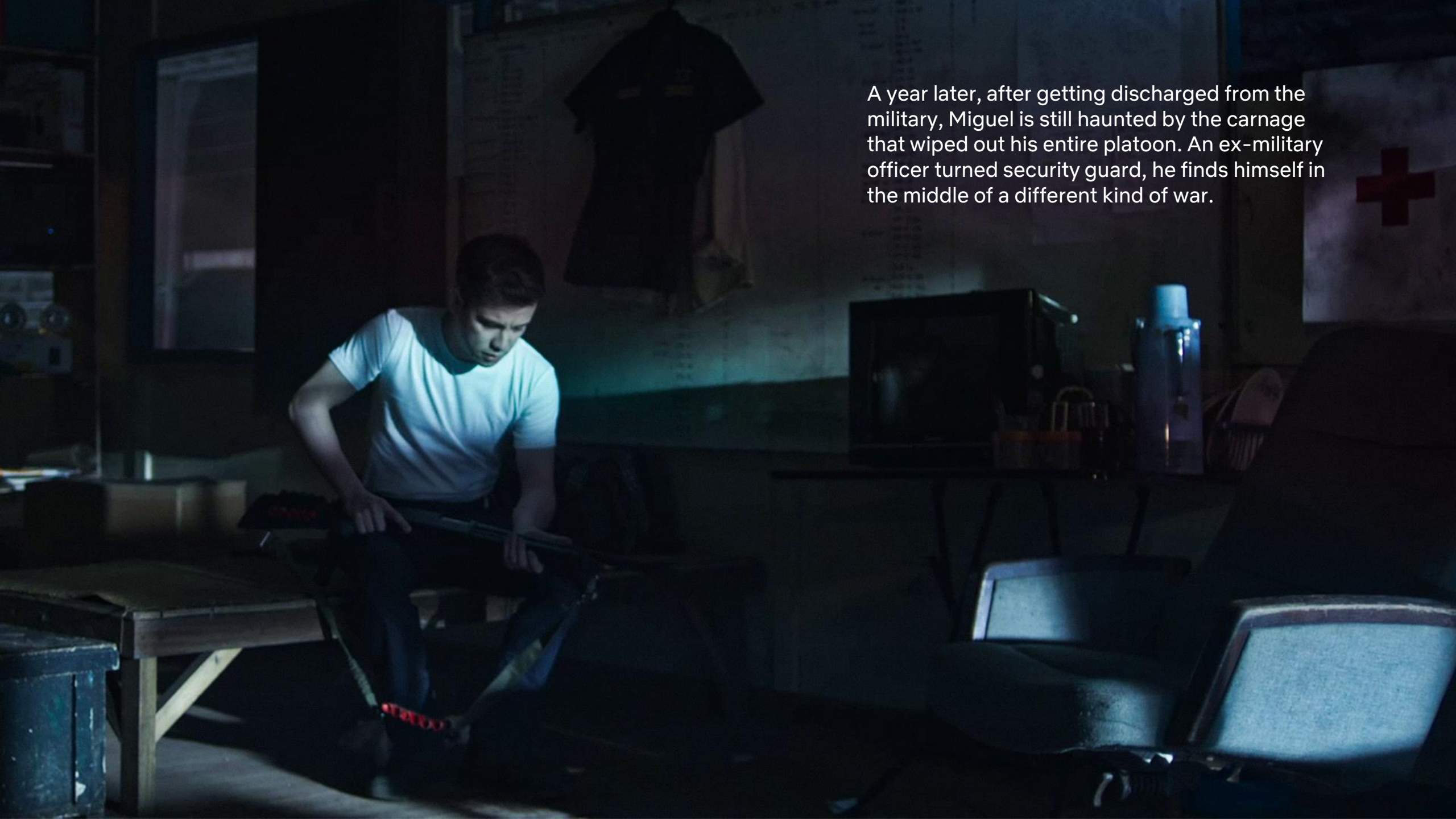


SYNOPSIS

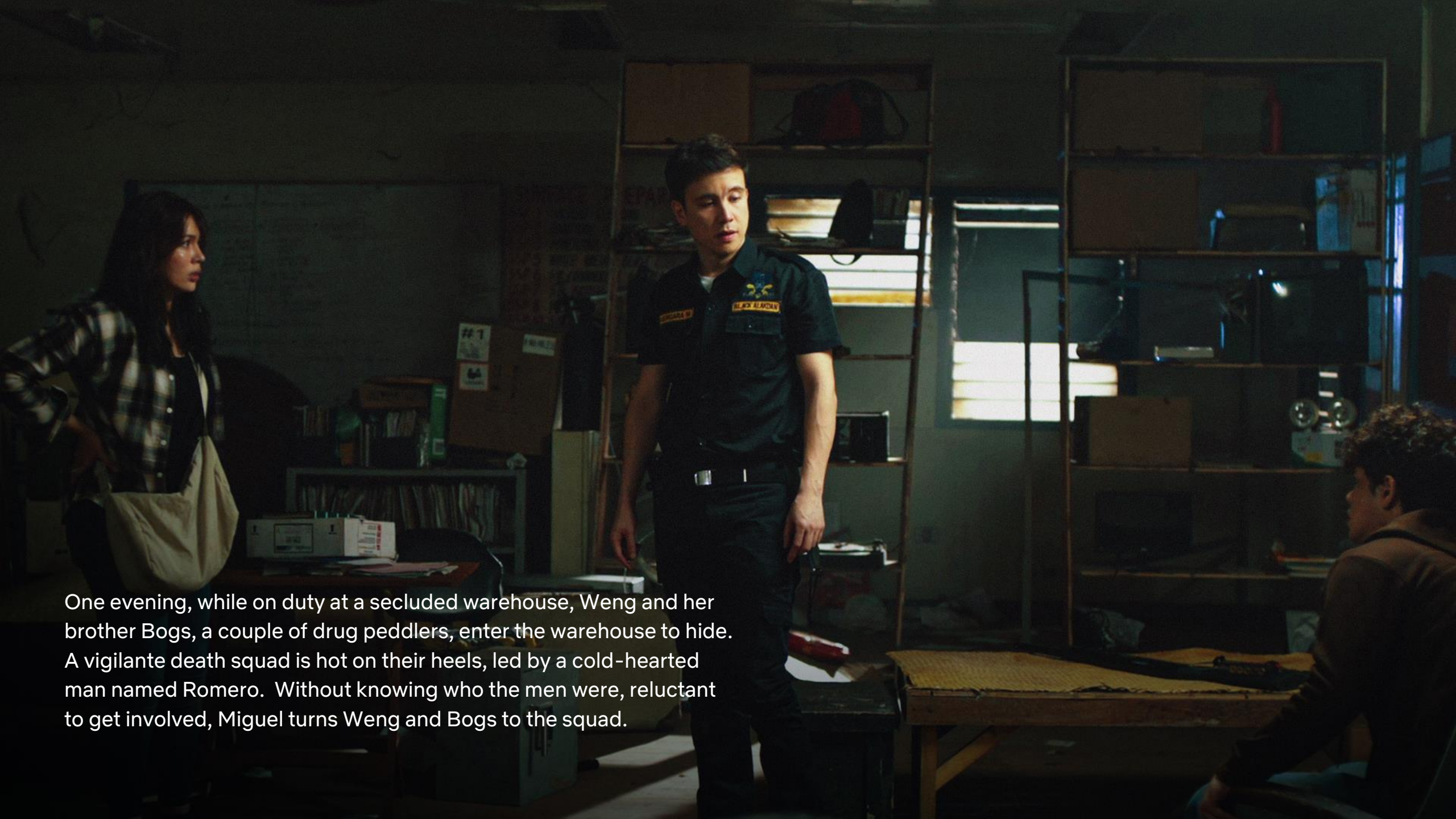
Sgt. Miguel, a platoon leader, guides his men into a hostile territory in the south of the Philippines where extremist groups thrive. In the thick forest, the confrontation turned tragic when all of his men were killed in the battle.



Witnessing his men murdered in front of him pushes Miguel to the edge. He goes amok, fighting the enemy with blood and vengeance until everyone is dead.

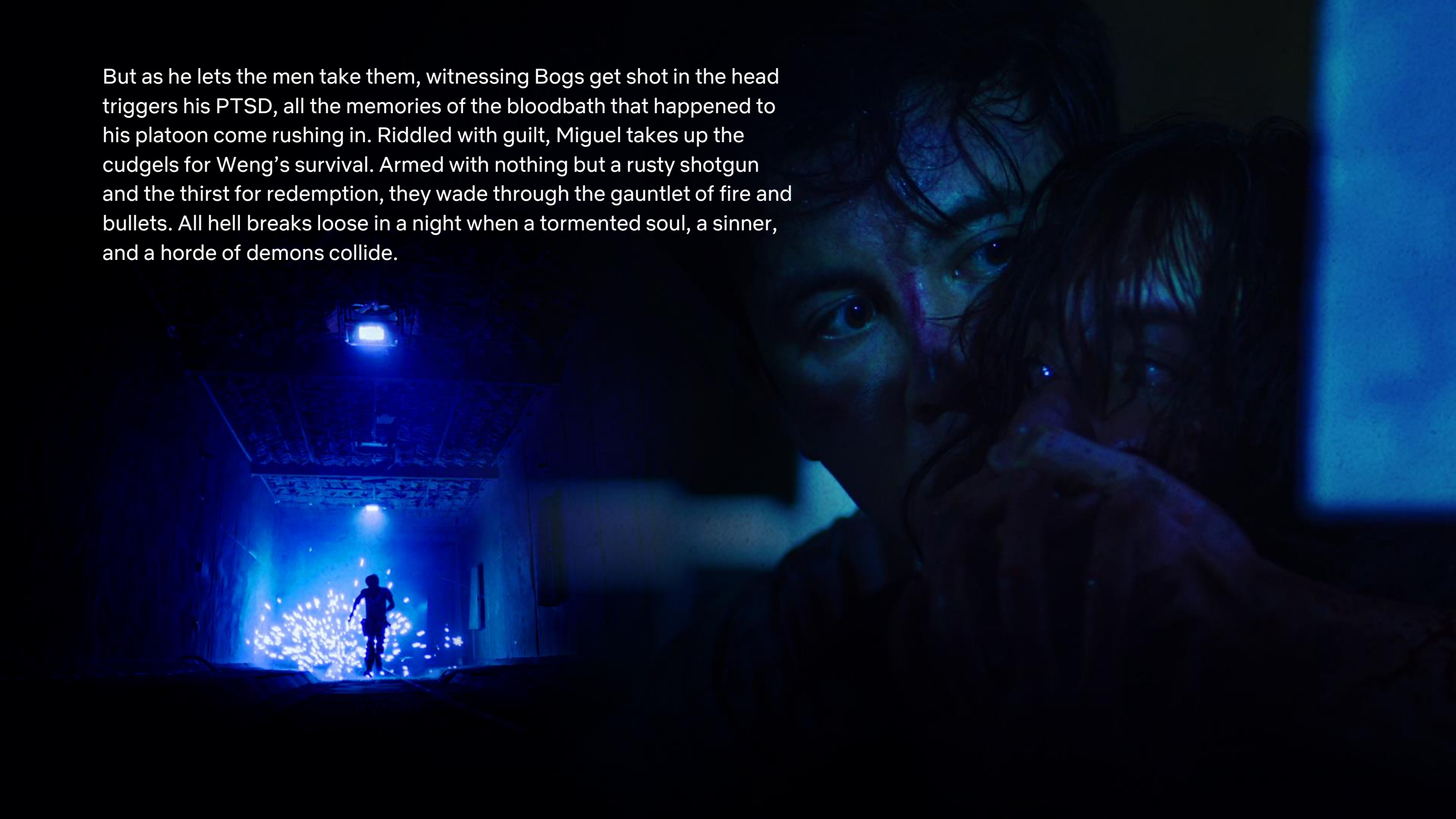


A year later, after getting discharged from the military, Miguel is still haunted by the carnage that wiped out his entire platoon. An ex-military officer turned security guard, he finds himself in the middle of a different kind of war.



One evening, while on duty at a secluded warehouse, Weng and her brother Bogs, a couple of drug peddlers, enter the warehouse to hide. A vigilante death squad is hot on their heels, led by a cold-hearted man named Romero. Without knowing who the men were, reluctant to get involved, Miguel turns Weng and Bogs to the squad.

But as he lets the men take them, witnessing Bogs get shot in the head triggers his PTSD, all the memories of the bloodbath that happened to his platoon come rushing in. Riddled with guilt, Miguel takes up the cudgels for Weng's survival. Armed with nothing but a rusty shotgun and the thirst for redemption, they wade through the gauntlet of fire and bullets. All hell breaks loose in a night when a tormented soul, a sinner, and a horde of demons collide.

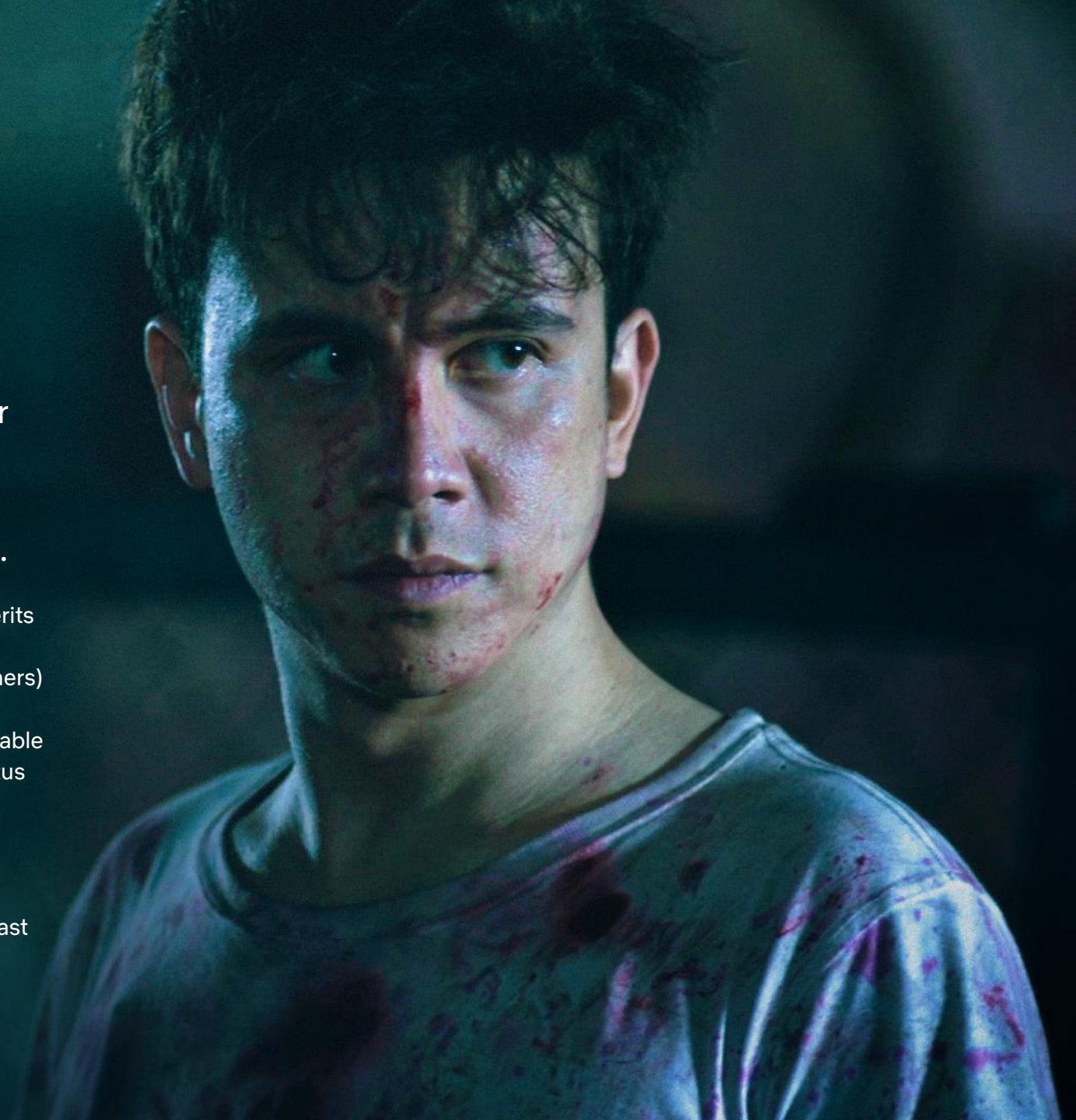


Arjo Atayde

as **MIGUEL**

An ex-military officer with a bad case of PTSD after surviving the massacre of his platoon, he goes through the motion by living a secluded life. He works in a warehouse to escape the noise of reality.

Coming from a line of actors, ARJO ATAYDE made a name on his own merits by taking on unconventional and diverse roles for ABS-CBN's top-rating primetime Philippine TV series such as FPJ's ANG PROBINSYANO (Brothers) and THE GENERAL'S DAUGHTER. At the same time, his performances in notable independent films gave him the international creds – the most notable among these is his role as Biggie Chen on Erik Matti's BUY BUST. His status has taken him into a new level with his solid performance in the highly successful series BAGMAN, for which he won the Best Actor award at the 2020 Asian Creative Awards. He is the only Filipino actor to date to ever receive the recognition. His upcoming international series, CATTLEYA KILLER, from ABS-CBN and Nathan Studios was previewed at MIPCOM last year and will be out soon this 2023.



Julia Montes

as WENG

Beautiful and fragile, a cleaned-up drug peddler assists his troubled younger brother in a drug deal with the bosses. Her decision to take on the job causes long-term consequences she can never take back.

A Filipino-German actress and model, Mara Hautea Schnittka, known professionally as JULIA MONTES is one of the most sought-after actresses in the Philippines. Her highly successful and award-winning noontime dramas in the past years, from WALANG HANGGAN to the highly acclaimed series DOBLE KARA, has made her a household name. Her acting prowess and versatility have given her the monicker "Royal Princess of Drama" or "Daytime Drama Queen". Her recent primetime series, ANG PROBINSIYANO and 24/7, have given her the female action gravitas, an edge ripe for international film roles.



Sid Lucero

as ROMERO

An ex-military officer with a bad case of PTSD after surviving the massacre of his platoon, he goes through the motion by living a secluded life. He works in a warehouse to escape the noise of reality.

A highly respected actor of his generation, SID LUCERO has worked with the who's who of the Philippine independent cinema – from Brillante Mendoza's CAPTIVE to Lav Diaz's NORTE, THE END OF HISTORY. He has worked and starred also in various highly acclaimed films such as Raya Martin's SMALLER SMALLER CIRCLE, John Paul Su's TOTO, Mario Cornejo's APOCALYPSE CHILD, just to name a few. He became a go-to actor for a lot of award-winning directors when he started winning acting awards for his roles in DONSOL, SELDA, and TAMBOLISTA. His body of work in both film and television has made him a highly respected actor in the Philippine industry.



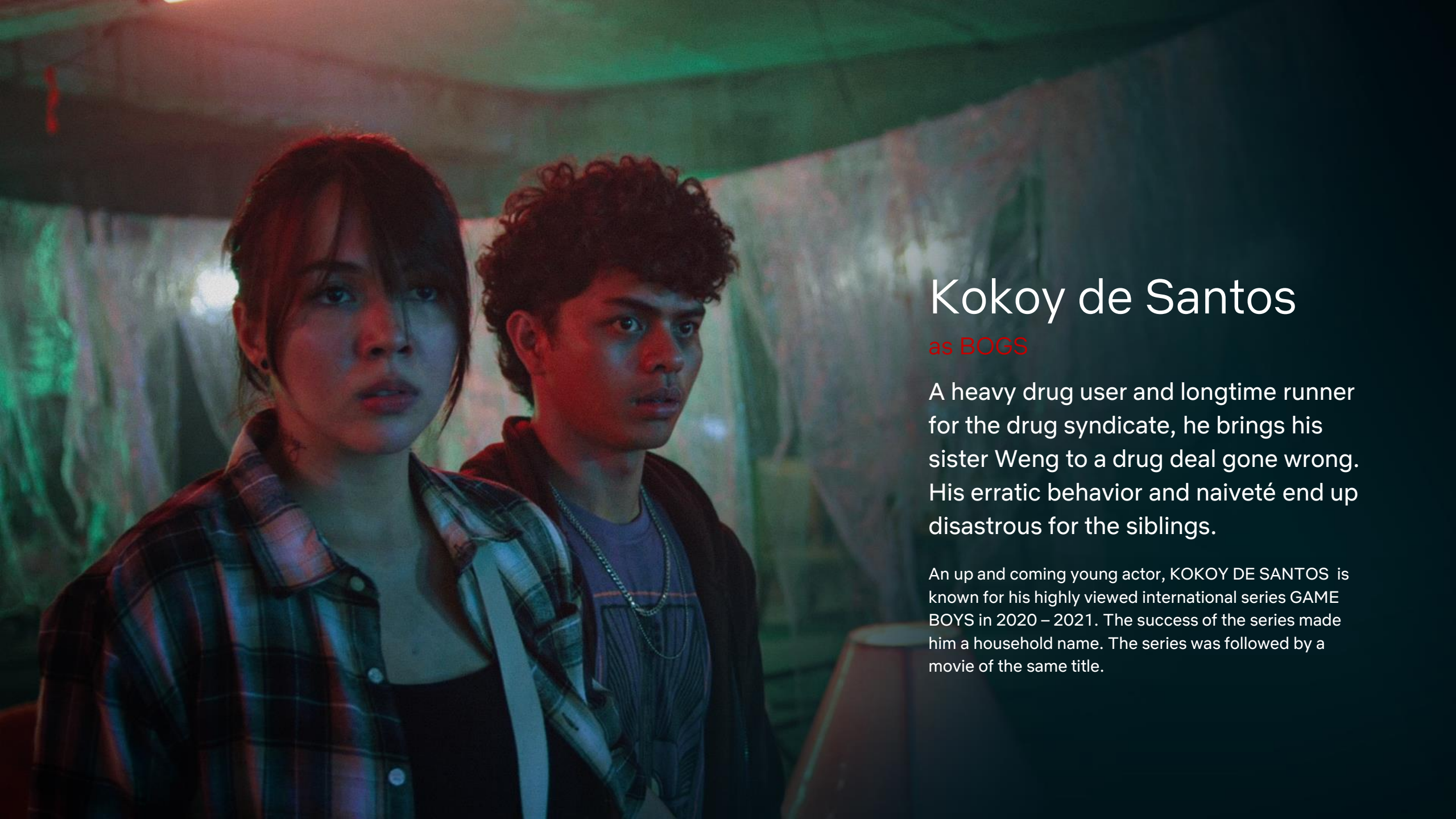
Enchong Dee

as LEON

Miguel's best friend and comrade in the military. His gruesome death fighting the extremist group is Miguel's crutch and burden.

One of the most popular actors in the Philippines, ENCHONG DEE is a model, actor, dancer, and a professional swimmer. His most recent work, *HERE COMES THE BRIDE*, won multiple awards at the recent commercial Metro Manila Film Festival. His Netflix hit, *ALTER ME* and Regal Entertainments' *ELISE*, is giving him the diverse roles, we don't normally see him do on television.





Kokoy de Santos

as **BOGS**

A heavy drug user and longtime runner for the drug syndicate, he brings his sister Weng to a drug deal gone wrong. His erratic behavior and naiveté end up disastrous for the siblings.

An up and coming young actor, KOKOY DE SANTOS is known for his highly viewed international series GAME BOYS in 2020 – 2021. The success of the series made him a household name. The series was followed by a movie of the same title.



DEATH SQUAD

VIN ABRENICA

PAOLO PARAISO

BERNARD PALANCA

CHOLO BARRETTO

IVAN CARAPIET

JULIO DE LEON

IAN LEE

GELLI BULAONG

KAYLEY CARRIGAN



ADDITIONAL CAST

JEFFREY TAM

MICHAEL ROY JORNALES

MAUREEN MAURICIO

ANNE FEO

LEVY IGNACIO

ELORA ESPANO

VICTOR MEDINA

CLAIRE RUIZ

MANU RESPALL

BONG CABRERA

ROSHON CANETE BARMAN

IVAN RIVERA

YIAN GABRIEL

NICO DANS

GERARD ACAO



EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

NATHAN STUDIOS

MARIA SOPHIA C. ATAYDE

MARIA ANGELA C. ATAYDE

JOSSETTE C. ATAYDE

STRAWDOGS STUDIO PRODUCTION

RICHARD V. SOMES

FUSEE

WILFREDO C. MANALANG

RAVEN BANNER ENTERTAINMENT

MICHAEL PASZT

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ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS

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ELSIE CAPIZ
GEORGE SOMMERROCK
ALICIA CATUBAY-WATT

LINE PRODUCER

FLORDELIZA HOMBRE

SUPERVISING PRODUCER

RIZA MONTELIBANO
NARCISO GULMATICO
GRACE ANN BODEGON - CASIMSIMAN

THE CREW

STORY

RICHARD V. SOMES

SCREENPLAY

RICHARD V. SOMES
JIMMY FLORES
WILL FREDO

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

LOUIE QUIRINO

PRODUCTION DESIGN

RICHARD V. SOMES

ASSOCIATE PRODUCTION DESIGNS

JULIUS SOMES
PJOY ABADIZA

2nd UNIT DIRECTOR

WILL FREDO
ERWIN TAGLE

FIGHT AND STUNTS DIRECTOR

ERWIN TAGLE

MASTER EDITOR

JAMIE DUMANCAS

COSTUME DESIGN

VANJO NOBLEZA DALMINO

MUSIC

JOSE ANTONIO BUENCAMINO

CASTING DIRECTOR

WILFREDO C. MANALANG

VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR

RHANCE CARIÑO

COLORIST

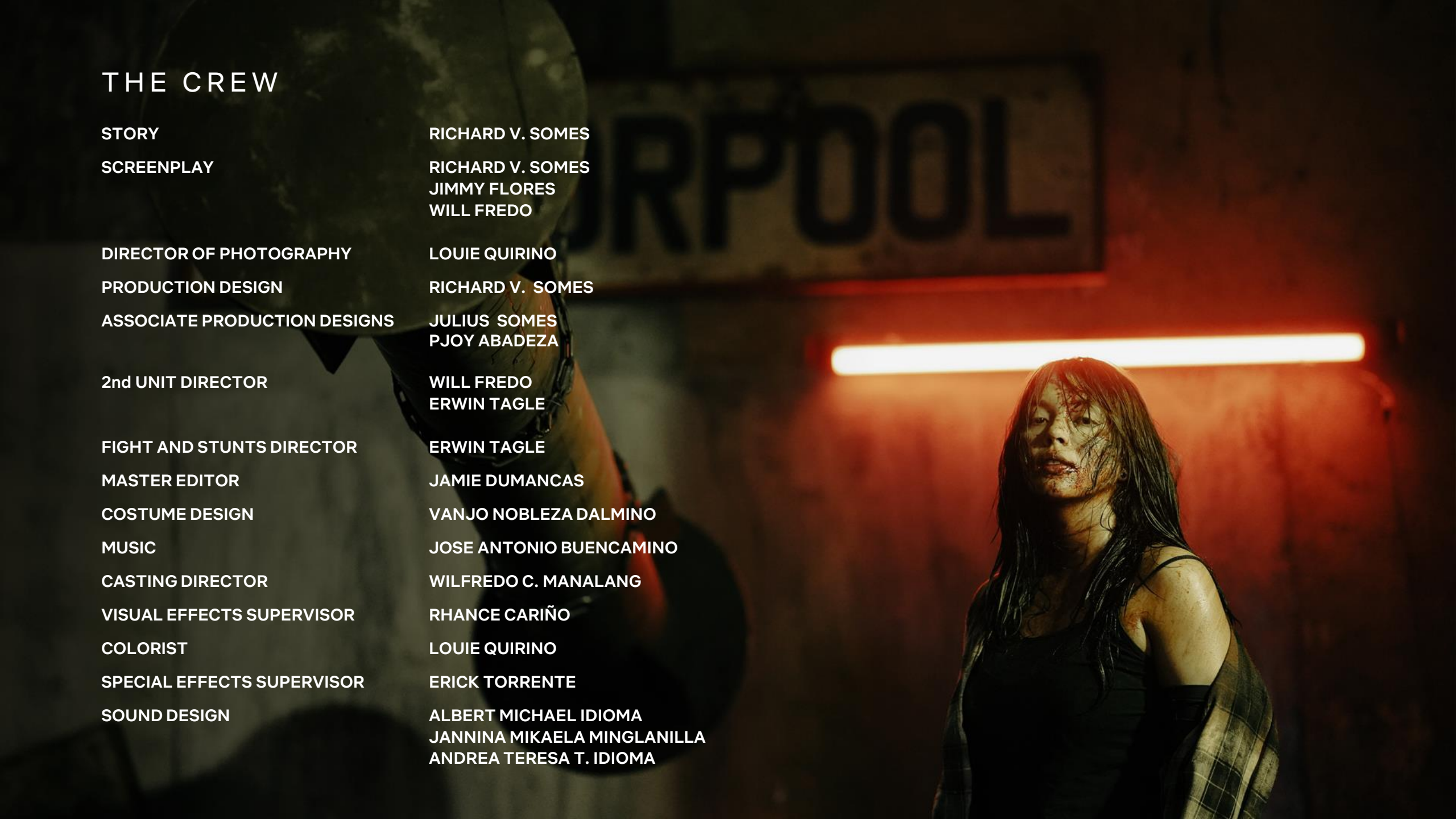
LOUIE QUIRINO

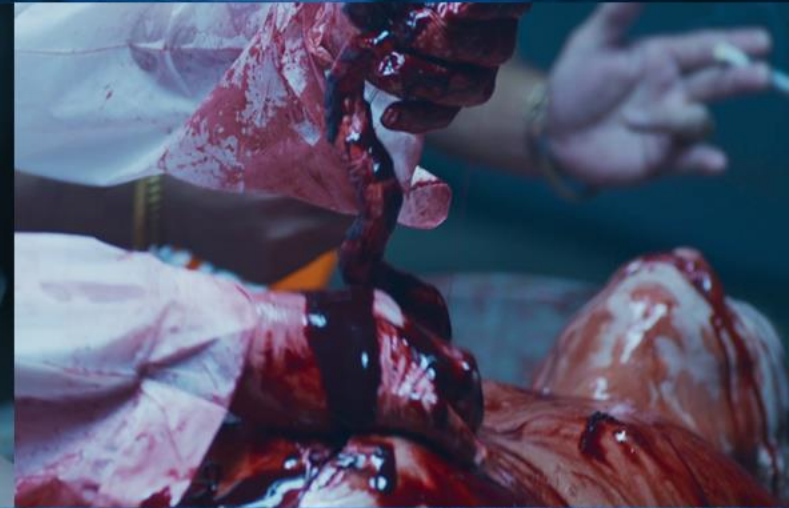
SPECIAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR

ERICK TORRENTE

SOUND DESIGN

ALBERT MICHAEL IDIOMA
JANNINA MIKAELA MINGLANILLA
ANDREA TERESA T. IDIOMA





*And he cried every night
And he cried everyday
All the rest of his life
'Til his bones withered away
And if you listen very close
When that cold wind blows
Hear the darkness call his name*

- **Darkness Calls** by Basti Artadi, Theme Song



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

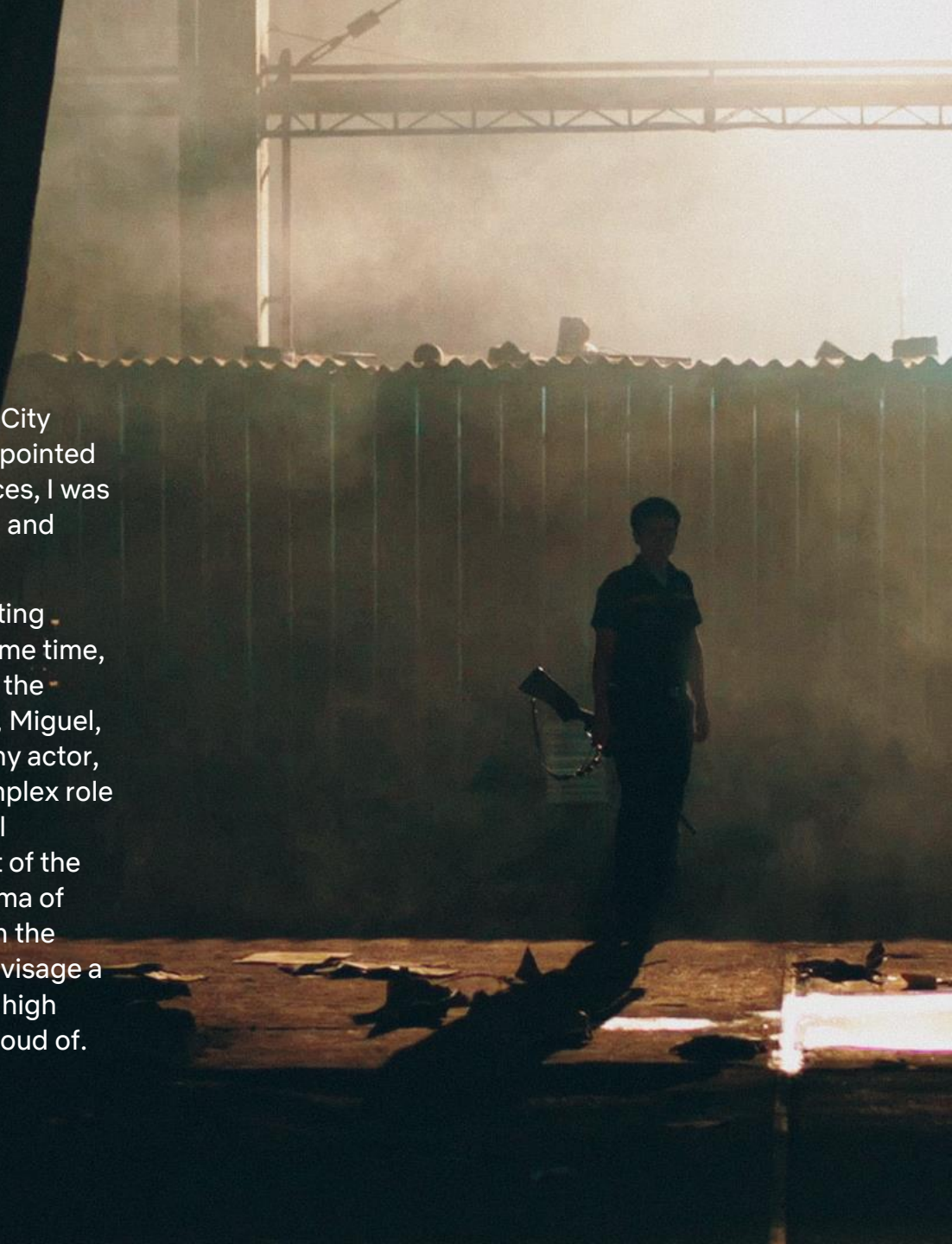
TOPAKK (TRIGGER) is a hardboiled action in the mold of contemporary Hong Kong action cinema, the Johnny To films in particular. The story focuses on the struggle of Miguel, a fierce Scout Ranger who suffers trauma after a savage battle against terrorists in the South of the Philippines. The traumatic experience caused his psychosis. Discharged from the military, he works as a security guard in a warehouse in Manila. When he saves a girl from syndicate villains, his otherwise peaceful new life turns deadly as the notorious hatchet man hunts them down to the end.

The vision is to trail-blaze a new trend in the action genre, as the film showcases many fight scenes. Hopefully, such direction will develop the craft of stunts and uplift the plight of stuntpeople of the Philippines movie industry.

The idea for TOPAKK came about after experiencing a series of events that shook me to my core.

I got hold up (robbery) in Quezon City when a drugged-up looking thief pointed a gun to my head. In other instances, I was chased down literally by muggers and another on public transportation.

The full-length film offers an exciting viewing experience and, at the same time, offers a view of the underworld in the Philippines. The lead protagonist, Miguel, is a compelling acting piece for any actor, essaying the challenging and complex role of someone suffering from mental dysfunction or PTSD. This aspect of the movie underlines the realistic drama of mental health, thus a discourse on the sensitive subject. My goal is to envisage a supercharged action film to be of high quality that we Filipinos can be proud of.



Born in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental with a degree and training as a Seaman, Richard V. Somes moved to Manila to pursue his other passion – film. With natural skills using paint and tools, he started out as a production designer for both film and television. Somes, under the wing of internationally known and respected Filipino director Erik Matti (On The Job, Buy Bust), his works got noticed and awarded including his production design work in the classic action-fantasy movie ANG PANDAY (2009).

With experience on the set, he ventured into directing both television and film. His work for ABS-CBN, BRIDGES OF LOVE (2015), THE STORY OF US (2016), A SOLDIER'S HEART (2020), to name a few made him a household name. In line with that, his films YANGGAW (2008), CORAZON: ANG UNANG ASWANG (2012) and EL PESTE (2018) became classics on its own right for its unique voice and attack on genre films.

WE WILL NOT DIE TONIGHT (2018), a break out success in the independent community took his career into the next level. With international festivals recognizing his hard edged aesthetics, Rob Hunter (FSR) describes the film “a grim and grimy riff on the likes of The Warriors and Judgment Night, and it’s no spoiler to say that some of our protagonists most definitely will die tonight.

It’s a low budget affair powered by ferocious, unrelenting action and an eye for streets running red with blood and grit, and it’ll leave action junkies wanting more.”

With 24 directorial credits to his name to date for both film and TV, Richard Somes is not stopping now. Even with the pandemic that literally plugged the past couple of years, he is able to finish new works in the can, KID ALPHA ONE (2022) and SENTENSYADOR (2022).

Matti says it best to describe Somes, “as a production designer and director for films, Richard Somes is a master of textures. If Pantera and Nine Inch Nails formed a band, the music that will come out of it would be like a Somes set design: gritty, theatrical, chaotic, metallic, in your face and uber gaudy with a double wink at humor only he and the ones who know him can fully understand.”

TOPAKK, his latest film, has received initial grant money from the Film Development Council of the Philippines. The collaboration with his producers and creative team makes TOPAKK his most ambitious opus to date.

Ricard V. Somes is ready to take on the world with guns blazing.

DIRECTOR'S PROFILE



Richard V. Somes
DIRECTOR

PRODUCER'S STATEMENT

Writer-Director Richard V. Somes has been a prolific filmmaker in the Philippines. I've personally worked with him on various highly rated television shows for ABS-CBN in my early years and have tracked his career ever since. His staple award-winning genre films has given him a unique voice in Philippine cinema. His most successful high-octane martial arts movie to date, *We Will Not Die Tonight*, introduced him to the world stage.

TOPAKK with its political and social themes, exposes a lot of what is happening in the Philippines, especially during the height of the war on drugs. Even with the violence portrayed in the script, the project looks deep into the morals of the players – the addicts, the pushers, the protectors, and even the politicians – blurring the lines and looking at them as victims of a vicious dangerous cycle. TOPAKK is a relevant topic now and a discourse that's universal with drugs and gun violence increasing all over the world.

As a producer, I'm confident the film will take Richard Somes next to the growing genre filmmakers coming from South East Asia. His aesthetics and sensibilities as a Filipino director is a new breed, a loud voice coming from a country with much political divide and growing turmoil.

Wilfredo Manalang, FUSEE
Producer





In line with our goal to empower storytellers and creators to take an active part in shedding light on sociopolitical issues in the country, we saw the potential in this project as it depicts the story of the underground world of drugs in the Philippines. Apart from that, we were also drawn to the story of the underground world of drugs in the Philippines.

Apart from that, we were also drawn to how the story leads the audience to understand and empathize with people dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. That said, we strongly believe TOPAKK is relevant to the international market because of the reality and advocacy it presents.

Director Richard Somes is a creative visionary. His spontaneity and openness to collaboration helped in making TOPAKK the movie that it is. We are thrilled to be part of the movie's amazing journey..

Maria Sophia C. Atayde, Nathan Studios
Executive Producer



NATHAN STUDIOS

Nathan Studios Inc. is a family-owned production company founded in 2021 by the Atayde clan. Motivated by the passion for creating meaningful content by veering away from the cookie-cutter formula projects, the studio gives life to stories that deserve to be told, stories that can become catalysts for change in society, and universal stories the viewer can simultaneously relate to, talk about, and ponder on.

With the goal of empowering storytellers and creators to take an active part in shedding light on sociopolitical issues in the country, Nathan Studios' roster of content reflects such consciousness, from Epic Media's *Misis Piggy* (2022) to the ABS-CBN International series *Cattleya Killer* (2022).

The country has been teeming with talents who are only waiting for a platform and an opportunity. Joining the foray by combining beauty, art, social awareness, and filmmaking, Nathan Studios Inc. aims to showcase the rich and brilliant Filipino culture and talent not only on the local scene but also on the global stage.

STRAWDOGS STUDIO

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Strawdogs Studio is the brainchild of Richard Somes given his production design expertise and penchant for genre films. He has built a team of artists that has been with him since the beginning of his career. Their highly acclaimed first project *YANNINGAW* (Affliction) opened doors for them to create some of the most intriguing films in the industry, like *SUPERMO*, *CORAZON ANG UNANG ASWANG*, and *HISTORIOGRAPHIKA ERRATA*, just to name a few. The studio's most successful film, *WE WILL NOT DIE TONIGHT*, circulated in international festivals and is now available on various streaming services.

Teaming up with the foremost stunt directors and coordinators in the Philippines, *TAGTEAM STUNTS*, headed by Erwin Tagle, the duo has strengthened their collaboration in their first film project together titled *VIRGO*. Their upcoming projects together, *SENTENSIYADOR* and *KID ALPHA ONE*, are already canned and ready for release.



FUSEE

A new media content creation and investment group, the founders and producers in our newly energized organization have always been revered independently for the promotion and advocacy of Asian representation.

FUSEE's first feature, a Japan - France - Philippines co-production project, is the 75th Cannes Film Festival 2022, Un Certain Regard, Camera D'Or Special Mention awardee *PLAN75* by Chie Hayakawa. Our second film, *Ma-an Asuncion* -Dagñalan's festival box-office hit *BLUE ROOM*, won multiple awards at the prestigious Cinemalaya18 Film Festival including Jury Prize Award and Best Director.

TOPAKK by Richard V. Somes is the company's first venture into action genre films.

FUSEE is continually in search of collaboration, partnerships, and exciting content with core Asian representation for the global market.

TOPANK

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**STRAWDOGS
STUDIO**

