

## Press report *Where the Night Stands Still* Berlinale 2025

- Press quotes [here](#)
- Press overview [here](#)
- Articles [here](#)

**PRESS QUOTES**

“... A rising directorial talent.”

**Screen International**

“Liryc Dela Cruz plays with the shadows of exile and memory for a personal and controlled debut feature about Filipino siblings reuniting in Italy”

**Cineuropa**

“Very composed and sedate, quietly appraising the fallout of the immigrant’s constant economic dependency. (...) “Cruz has great formal command over the framing, pulling us into the fold of his narrative with quiet confidence.”

**High on Films**

“With a patient and precise direction, Liryc’s chamber room drama unveils the fragility of the human spirit through the Filipino diaspora ...a moralistic story about Filipino family relations, immigrant experiences, the homeland and identity.”

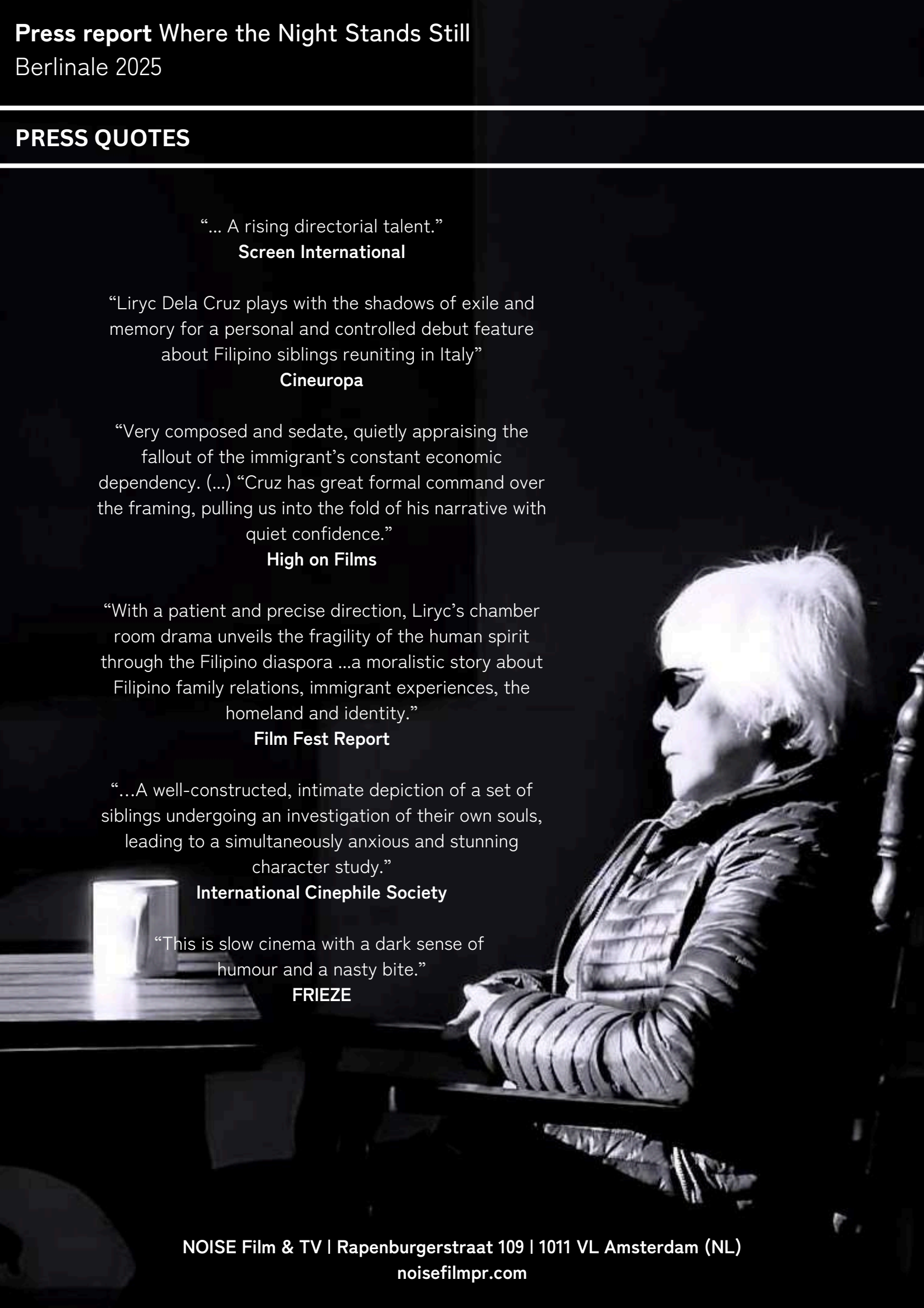
**Film Fest Report**

“...A well-constructed, intimate depiction of a set of siblings undergoing an investigation of their own souls, leading to a simultaneously anxious and stunning character study.”

**International Cinephile Society**

“This is slow cinema with a dark sense of humour and a nasty bite.”

**FRIEZE**





## PRESS QUOTES

“An incisive parable on decolonisation.”

**Le Polyester**

“The cinematography is deliberate, with careful framing that creates a sense of isolation between the characters even when they share the same space.”

**Overly Honest Reviews**

“Dela Cruz honors the great authorial tradition of cinema in his country of origin, also taking care of script, editing and photography of a powerful black and white, cut off by play of light.”

**MyMovies**

“...Undeniably well-crafted...”

**Overly Honest Reviews**

“Closing with a dedication to the global multitude of domestic workers from the Philippines, the film is informed by the legacy of colonialism. But Dela Cruz’s decision to dramatise the theme in such a low-key, even visually lyrical fashion makes it all the more troubling for the understated tremors of unease it creates.”

**Screen International**

“Finely acted, elegantly executed and seemingly undemonstrative.”

**Screen International**

“Beautifully made in terms of the visual approach, ... a well-crafted, intriguing film.”

**International Cinephile Society**



## PRESS QUOTES

“De la Cruz is deeply attentive to the visual and auditory performance of the work by creating a refined and solid image and sound structure, in a look halfway between two cinematographic traditions: Italian neorealism and Filipino lyric cinema.”

**Taxidrivrs**

“An essential piece of an existential chess of a family that has long been irremediably fragmented.”

**C7nema**

“...A new voice in cinema capable of carrying forward the legacy of great auteurs like Lav Diaz. (...) Perfectly expressing the sentiment of immigration and the colonial imaginary that envelops the Filipino people.”

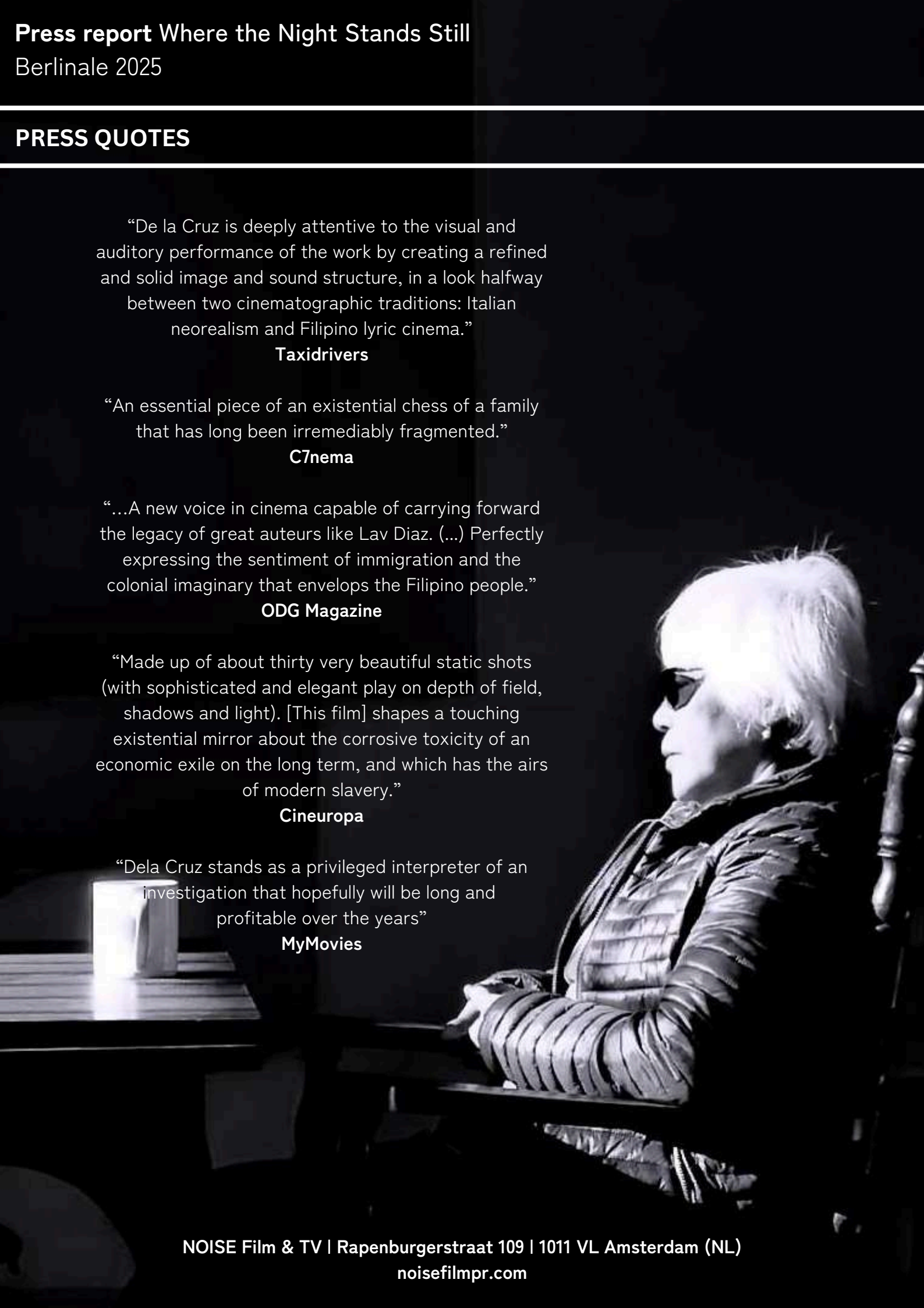
**ODG Magazine**

“Made up of about thirty very beautiful static shots (with sophisticated and elegant play on depth of field, shadows and light). [This film] shapes a touching existential mirror about the corrosive toxicity of an economic exile on the long term, and which has the airs of modern slavery.”

**Cineuropa**

“Dela Cruz stands as a privileged interpreter of an investigation that hopefully will be long and profitable over the years”

**MyMovies**



## PRESS QUOTES

“Together with a particularly scratchy ending, it gives light to a meritorious perspective on a cultural and social tradition of a certain relevance, which concerns the members of one of the largest foreign communities in our country.”

**MyMovies**

“The cinematography in Where the Night Stands Still is masterfully rendered in monochrome, heightening the film’s emotional resonance and contemplative narrative.”

**Universal Cinema**

“...A masterful use of economy and mise-en-scène where contemplation and family dynamics slowly simmer into a dramatic eruption.”

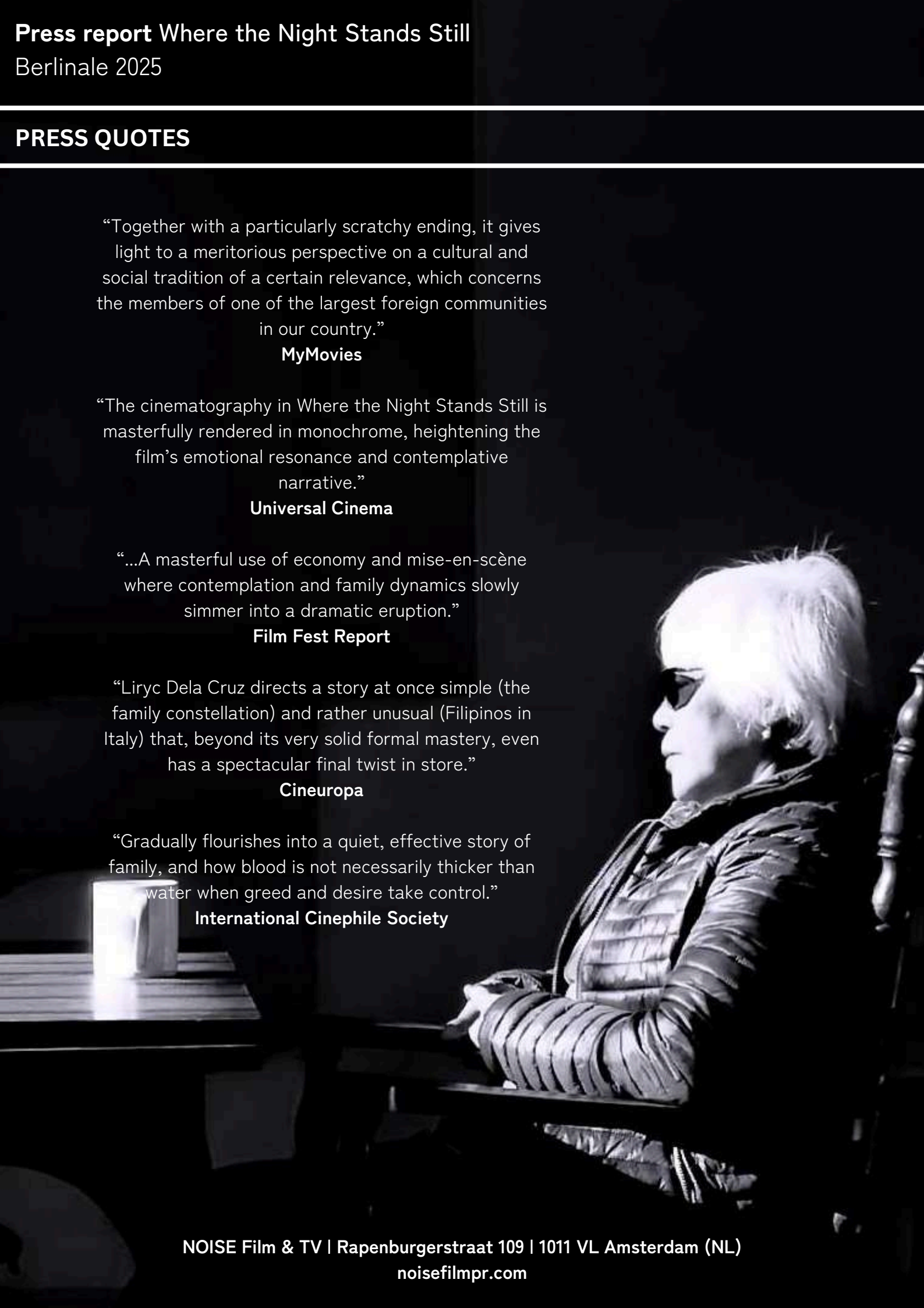
**Film Fest Report**

“Liryc Dela Cruz directs a story at once simple (the family constellation) and rather unusual (Filipinos in Italy) that, beyond its very solid formal mastery, even has a spectacular final twist in store.”

**Cineuropa**

“Gradually flourishes into a quiet, effective story of family, and how blood is not necessarily thicker than water when greed and desire take control.”

**International Cinephile Society**





## PRESS QUOTES

“The lighting is striking, playing with contrast to mirror the emotional and psychological distance between them. It's easy to appreciate how much thought went into the visuals...”

**Overly Honest Reviews**

“...This very succinct piece has its own feel and thematics – and a dramatic language with more than a touch of Chekhov, in its musing on an old order that is passing while its tainted legacy remains.”

**Screen International**

“Breathes softly through its buildup, resulting in a climax ringing with a sharp sense of inevitability.”

**High on Films**

“A simple and evocative drama in which Dela Cruz examines familial dynamics in exceptional detail...”

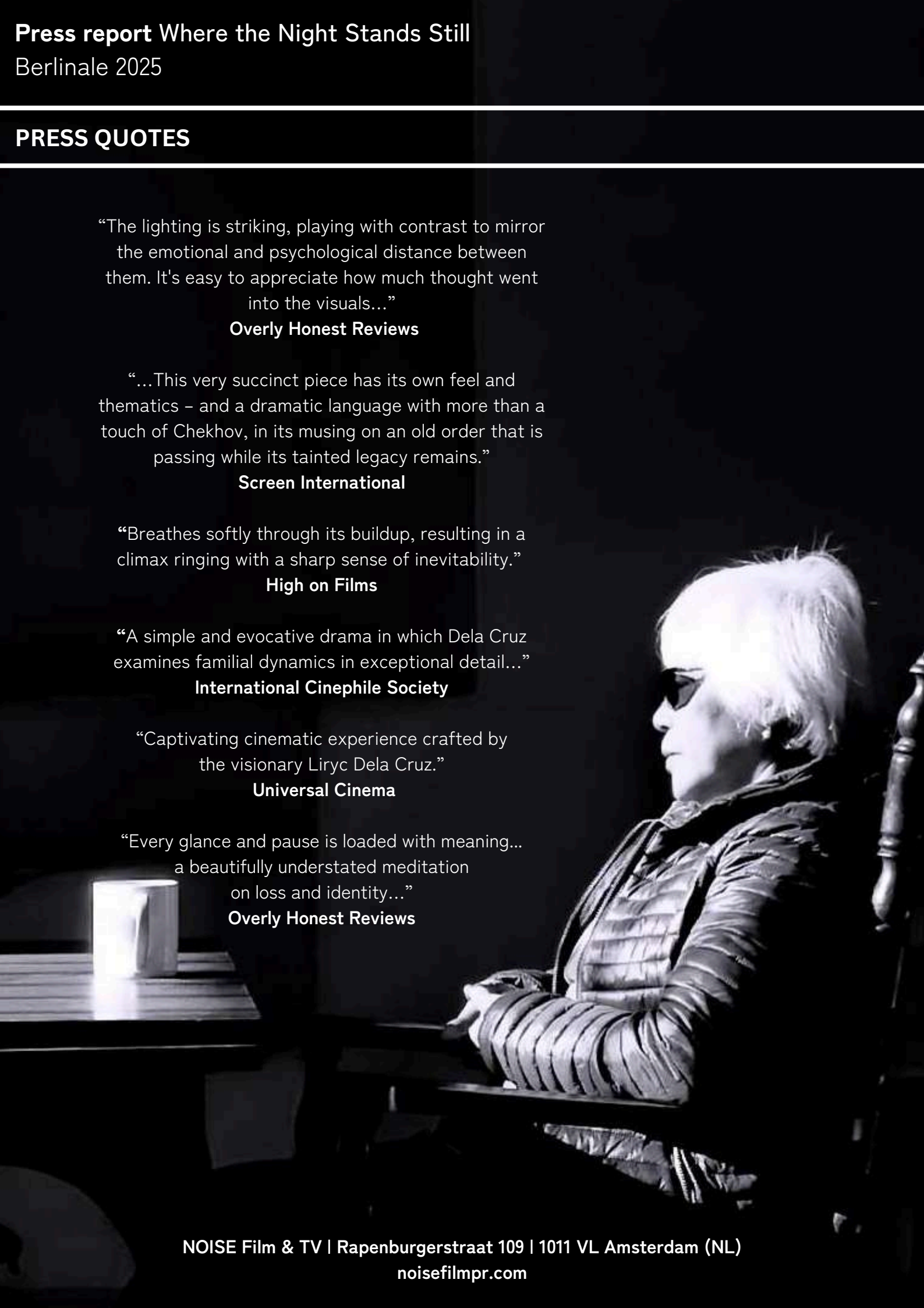
**International Cinephile Society**

“Captivating cinematic experience crafted by the visionary Liryc Dela Cruz.”

**Universal Cinema**

“Every glance and pause is loaded with meaning... a beautifully understated meditation on loss and identity...”

**Overly Honest Reviews**



# Press report Where the Night Stands Still

Berlinale 2025

## PRESS OVERVIEW

- 21 January 2025 **Cineuropa**  
Film mentioned and listed in article  
[The Berlinale unveils the titles playing in its Competition and its Perspectives and Berlinale Special strands](#)
- 21 January 2025 **Screen International**  
Film listed in article  
[Berlin film festival unveils line-ups for Competition, new Perspectives section](#)
- 22 January 2025 **Variety**  
Film mentioned in article  
[‘Where the Night Stands Still,’ a ‘Meditation on the Filipino Experience,’ Boarded by Alpha Violet Ahead of Berlin Premiere \(EXCLUSIVE\)](#)
- 3 February 2025 **Cineuropa**  
Interview with director Jeppe Rønde  
[Alpha Violet to boast another new young talent at Berlin](#)
- 4 February 2025 **The Hollywood Reporter**  
Positive review  
[‘Where the Night Stands Still’ Explores Colonialism and the Filipino Psyche \(Exclusive Berlin Trailer\)](#)
- 7 February 2025 **Screen International**  
Film mentioned in article  
[Berlin 2025: Screen’s guide to the Perspectives titles](#)
- 7 February 2025 **Screen International**  
Film listed in article  
[The lowdown on the Berlin Film Festival 2025 titles](#)
- 10 February 2025 **Tip Berlin (DE)**  
Film mentioned in article  
[Highlights of the Berlinale 2025: Film tips for each section](#)

# Press report Where the Night Stands Still

Berlinale 2025

## PRESS OVERVIEW

- 13 February 2025 **Film TV (IT)**  
Film mentioned in article  
[Berlin 2025: Like the Night, the Shadows of the Filipino Diaspora](#)
- 13 February 2025 **Siegessaüle Magazin (DE)**  
Film mentioned in article  
[All queer film highlights of the Berlinale 2025](#)
- 14 February 2025 **Frieze**  
Film mentioned in article  
[What to See During Berlin International Film Festival 2025](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Cineuropa**  
Positive review  
[Review: Where the Night Stands Still](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Film Fest Report**  
Positive review  
[Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still \(dir. Liryc Dela Cruz\) | Review](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Filmmaker Mag**  
Film mentioned in article  
[“It Carries the Weight of Improvisation but Also Inevitability”: Liryc Dela Cruz on his Berlinale-premiering Where the Night Stands Still \(Come la Notte\)](#)
- 15 February 2025 **International Cinephile Society**  
Positive review  
[Berlinale 2025 review: Where the Night Stands Still \(Liryc Dela Cruz\)](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Overly Honest Reviews**  
Mixed review  
[A Quiet Storm of Emotion and Memory](#)



# Press report Where the Night Stands Still

Berlinale 2025

## PRESS OVERVIEW

- 15 February 2025 **Screen Daily (in print article)**  
Film listed in article  
Screenings: Where the Night Stands Still
- 15 February 2025 **Screen Daily**  
Positive review  
[‘Where The Night Stands Still’ review: Modest Filipino domestic helper drama is set in rural Italy](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Asian Movie Pulse**  
Positive review  
[Film Review: Where the Night Stands Still \(2025\) by Liryc Dela Cruz](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Cinecittà (IT)**  
Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz  
[‘Come la notte’. The Filipino community in Italy in Liryc Dela Cruz's debut](#)
- 15 February 2025 **Italy for Movies (IT)**  
Article on the film  
[‘Come la notte’, the hidden scars of the Filipino community in Italy](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Eye for Film**  
Mixed review  
[Where The Night Stands Still](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Le Polyester**  
Positive review  
[Berlinale | Review: Where the Night Stands Still](#)
- 16 February 2025 **The Manila Times**  
Mixed review  
[The Philippines at Berlinale 2025: Showcasing Filipino cinema on the global stage](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Micropsia Cine (IT)**  
Article on the film  
[Berlinale 2025: Review of “Where the Night Stands Still” \(“Come la notte”\), by Liryc Dela Cruz \(Perspectives\)](#)

# Press report Where the Night Stands Still

Berlinale 2025

## PRESS OVERVIEW

- 16 February 2025 **My Movies**  
Positive review  
[Like the night, Dela Cruz places himself as a privileged interpreter of an investigation that is hoped to be long and fruitful over the years](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Screen International**  
Mentioned in newsletter  
[Berlin Daily: Top Stories](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Style (RU)**  
Mentioned in article  
[Berlinale 2025: Where Dreams Lead](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Taxidrivrs**  
Article on the film  
['Like the Night' or the Banality of Colonial Evil](#)
- 17 February 2025 **Journey to Cinema**  
Positive review  
[Where the Night Stands Still: Between Light, Absence and Loss](#)
- 18 February 2025 **The Hollywood Reporter Italy**  
Mentioned in article  
[Berlin 75, presented Come la notte, by the Italian-Filipino director Liryc Dela Cruz, in the Perspectives section](#)
- 18 February 2025 **Universal Cinema**  
Positive review  
[Berlinale 2025 | Where the Night Stands Still](#)
- 19 February 2025 **Cinephilia (GR)**  
Mixed review  
[Like the night](#)
- 16 February 2025 **Film Fest Report**  
Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz  
[Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still | Interview with Liryc Dela Cruz](#)

# Press report Where the Night Stands Still

Berlinale 2025

## PRESS OVERVIEW

- 21 February 2025 **Tagesspiegel (DE) (print and online)**  
Article on the film  
[New Young Talent Competition at the Berlinale: This was the first issue of “Perspectives”](#)
- 23 February 2025 **High on Films**  
Positive review  
[Where The Night Stands Still \(Come la notte, 2025\) ‘Berlinale’ Movie Review: A Spare Reflection on Displaced Belonging](#)
- 24 February 2025 **Fred**  
Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz  
[Liryc Dela Cruz, director of When the night stands still on belonging both to Italy and The Philippines](#)
- 24 February 2025 **Film Rezensionen (DE)**  
Positive review  
[Where the Night Stands Still](#)
- 24 February 2025 **ODG Magazine**  
Positive review  
[Una Prospetiva Sul Futuro](#)
- 25 February 2025 **The Upcoming**  
Interview with Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes, Caringal & Barcellano  
[Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes, Caringal & Barcellano on Where the Night Stands Still at Berlin 2025](#)
- 1 March 2025 **Sentieri Selvaggi (IT)**  
Positive review  
[Like the Night, by Liryc Dela Cruz](#)
- 3 March 2025 **C7nema (PT)**  
Positive review  
[Come la notte: the unshakable weight of the past](#)



### ARTICLES

21 January 2025 **Cineuropa**

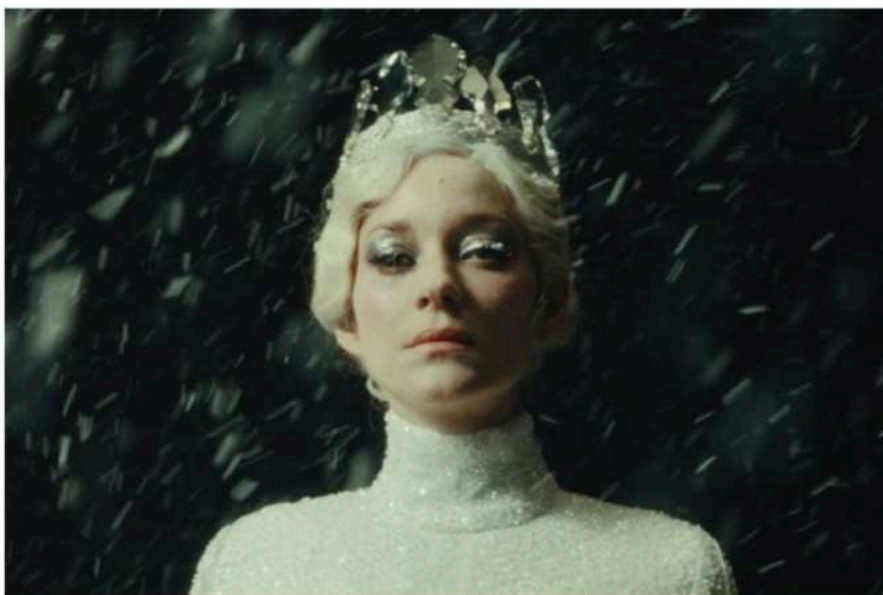
Film mentioned and listed in article

[The Berlinale unveils the titles playing in its Competition and its Perspectives and Berlinale Special strands](#)

#### The Berlinale unveils the titles playing in its Competition and its Perspectives and Berlinale Special strands

by **DAVIDE ABBATESCIANNI**

21/01/2025 - Titles vying for the Golden Bear include European (co-)productions helmed by the likes of Lucile Hadžihalilović, Léonor Serraille, Dag Johan Haugerud, Radu Jude and Richard Linklater



*The Ice Tower* by Lucile Hadžihalilović

Today, the 19 films vying for the Golden and Silver Bears at the 75th [Berlin International Film Festival](#) were unveiled, along with the full line-ups of the festival's Perspectives and Berlinale Special sections.

On 13 February, the festival will kick off at the Berlinale Palast with the world premiere of **Tom Tykwer's** *The Light* [+]. During the opening gala, the international jury (chaired by **Todd Haynes**) will be introduced, and the Honorary Lifetime Achievement Golden Bear will be awarded to celebrated Scottish actor **Tilda Swinton**. The gala, hosted by renowned Luxembourg actor, presenter, director, and producer **Désirée Nosbusch**, will also be transmitted live to seven cities across Germany in co-operation with [X Verleih](#), allowing audiences in Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Cologne, Leipzig, Munich, and Stuttgart to join in the celebration.

### ARTICLES

Replacing the previous Encounters section, the Perspectives competition comprises 14 feature film debuts, of which five films were directed or co-directed by women, and two were directed by non-binary filmmakers. Several European productions or co-productions stand out, such as **Liryc Dela Cruz's *Where the Night Stands Still* [+]**, which explores the tensions between three Filipino siblings navigating inherited family dynamics in Italy; **Paula Tomás Marques' *Two Times João Liberada* [+]**, a compelling biopic about gender-nonconformity against the backdrop of the Inquisition; **Arnaud Dufey's and Charlotte Devillers' *We Believe You* [+]**, which follows a mother trying to protect her children from their father; **Florian Pochlatko's *How to Be Normal and the Oddness of the Other World* [+]** and **Urška Djukić's *Little Trouble Girls* [+]**, which delve into deeply personal journeys of self-discovery and transformation; as well as **Valentine Cadic's *That Summer in Paris* [+]**, **Bálint Dániel Sós' *Growing Down* [+]** and **Constanze Klaue's *Punching the World* [+]**.

Lastly, late additions to the Berlinale Special sidebar (read [news](#)) include **Edgar Reitz's *Leibniz - Chronicle of a Lost Painting* [+]**, which delves into German thinker Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz; **Burhan Qurbani's *No Beast. So Fierce.* [+]**, which reimagines Richard III as a gripping tale of a Berlin underworld matriarch; **Marcin Wierchowski's *Das Deutsche Volk* [+]**, a deeply moving documentary on the aftermath of the 2020 Hanau attacks; and **Petra Volpe's *Late Shift* [+]**, a portrait of the emotional strain suffered by a hospital nurse during a chaotic shift.

#### Perspectives

*That Summer in Paris* [+] - Valentine Cadic (France)

*Where the Night Stands Still* [+] - Liryc Dela Cruz (Italy/Philippines)

*Eel* - Chu Chun-Teng (Taiwan)

*Shadowbox* [+] - Tanushree Das and Saumyananda Sahi (India/France/USA/Spain)

*We Believe You* [+] - Arnaud Dufey's and Charlotte Devillers (Belgium)

*Little Trouble Girls* [+] - Urška Djukić (Slovenia/Italy/Croatia/Serbia)

*BLKNWS: Terms & Conditions* - Kahlil Joseph (USA)

*Punching the World* [+] - Constanze Klaue (Germany)

*Two Times João Liberada* [+] - Paula Tomás Marques (Portugal)

*The Devil Smokes (and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box)* - Ernesto Martínez Bucio (Mexico)

*How to Be Normal and the Oddness of the Other World* [+] - Florian Pochlatko (Austria)

*The Settlement* [+] - Mohamed Rashad (Egypt/France/Germany/Qatar/Saudi Arabia)

*Growing Down* [+] - Bálint Dániel Sós (Hungary)

*Mad Bills to Pay (or Destiny, dile que no soy malo)* - Joel Alfonso Vargas (USA)

ARTICLES

21 January 2025 **Screen International**  
Film listed in article  
[Berlin film festival unveils line-ups for  
Competition, new Perspectives section](#)

NEWS

# Berlin film festival unveils line-ups for Competition, new Perspectives section

BY MICHAEL ROSSER | 21 JANUARY 2025

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SOURCE: SABRINA LANTOS / SONY PICTURES CLASSICS  
'BLUE MOON'

The 75th Berlin International Film Festival (February 13-23) has unveiled the 19 titles set to play in its official Competition and films selected for its new competitive Perspectives strand.

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18th ASIAN FILM AWARDS  
16.03.2025  
www.afa-academy.com


MOST POPULAR



Amazon MGM's 'Jack Ryan' feature starring John Krasinski and Sienna Miller preps UK shoot



'Mr. Burton' review: Toby Jones stars in Richard Burton origins story



Oscars 2025 speeches: Sean Baker calls for

NOISE Film & TV | Rapenburgerstraat 109 | 1011 VL Amsterdam (NL)  
noisefilmpr.com



## ARTICLES

### Perspectives

- *The Settlement* (Egy-Fr-Ger-Saudi-Qat), dir. Mohamed Rashad \*
- *Shadowbox* (India-France-USA-Spain), dir. Tanushree Das, Saumyananda Sahi \*
- *BLKNWS: Terms & Conditions* (US), dir. Kahlil Joseph \*
- *Where the Night Stands Still* (It-Phil), dir. Liryc Dela Cruz \*
- *The Devil Smokes (and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box)* (Mex), dir. Ernesto Martinez Bucio \*
- *Two Times João Liberada* (Port), dir. Paula Tomás Marques \*
- *Eel* (Tai), dir. Chu Chun-Teng \*
- *How to Be Normal and the Oddness of the Other World* (Austria), dir. Florian Pochlatko \*
- *Little Trouble Girls* (Slovenia-It-Cro-Ser), dir. Urška Djukić \*
- *Mad Bills to Pay (or Destiny, dile que no soy malo)* (US), dir. Joel Alfonso Vargas
- *Growing Down* (Hun), dir. Bálint Dániel Sós \*
- *Punching The World* (Ger), dir. Constanze Klaue \*
- *We believe You* (Bel), dir. Arnaud Dufey, Charlotte Devillers \*
- *That Summer In Paris* (Fra), dir. Valentine Cadic \*

### ARTICLES

22 January 2025 **Variety**

Film mentioned in article






[‘Where the Night Stands Still,’ a ‘Meditation on the Filipino Experience,’ Boarded by Alpha Violet Ahead of Berlin Premiere \(EXCLUSIVE\)](#)


Home > Film > News

Jan 22, 2025 4:25am PT

## ‘Where the Night Stands Still,’ a ‘Meditation on the Filipino Experience,’ Boarded by Alpha Violet Ahead of Berlin Premiere (EXCLUSIVE)

By Leo Barraclough





Courtesy of Pelicula II Mio Filipino Collective

Paris-based sales agency [Alpha Violet](#) has boarded the international sales for [Liryc Dela Cruz](#)'s "Where the Night Stands Still," which will world premiere in Berlinale's section for first-time fiction features, Perspectives.

After years of separation, three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, reunite in their older sister Lilia's inherited villa. As the night deepens, their long-awaited reunion stirs old memories and unspoken grievances. The air is thick with the weight of what has been left unsaid over time, as the siblings navigate the distance that has grown between them.

"This film is a meditation on the Filipino experience, how our history of colonization, migration and survival reverberates through the diaspora," Dela Cruz says. "It examines the delicate interplay of care and estrangement, shaped by a world that has long demanded our resilience. In tracing these fractures, it seeks to uncover the quiet strength and lingering wounds of a people shaped by both history and resistance."

ARTICLES

“We were quickly impressed by the beauty of the black-and-white image and slowly fell into the storytelling with some of the mysterious intrigues of this film,” Virginie Devesa and Keiko Funato, CEOs of Alpha Violet, state. “Liryc Dela Cruz’s resolute aesthetic sense and open spirit as a migrant from the Philippines seduced us just as deeply.”

“Where the Night Stands Still” stars Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.

It is produced by Pelircula, Ozono and Il Mio Filippino Collective, with co-production by Reckless Natarajan Pictures. Il Mio Filippino Collective is a collective of Filipino domestic and care workers, artists, community organizers and members of the diaspora based in Italy.

Dela Cruz, who was born in the Philippines but lives in Rome, Italy, took part in Berlinale’s talent development program Berlinale Talents in 2020.



### ARTICLES

3 February 2025 **Cineuropa**

Interview with director Jeppe Rønde

[Alpha Violet to boast another new young talent at Berlin](#)

#### Alpha Violet to boast another new young talent at Berlin

by **FABIEN LEMERCIER**

© 03/02/2025 - The Perspectives section will see the French sales agent wagering on *Where the Night Stands Still* by Filipino director Philippin Liryc Dela Cruz, a first feature film majority funded by Italy



*Where the Night Stands Still* by Liryc Dela Cruz

We've stopped keeping count of the new talented directors unearthed over the years by French international sales agent **Alpha Violet**, whose most notable recent discoveries include Mexico's **Lila Avilés** (of *Totem* [+]), which competed in Berlin in 2023), fellow Mexicans **Astrid Rondero** and **Fernanda Valadez** (awarded the Grand Jury Prize in the Sundance Film Festival's 2024 World Cinema Dramatic competition via *Sujo* [+]), Taiwan's **Chiang Wei Liang** (scooping a Special Mention in the Cannes' Golden Camera line-up in 2024 thanks to *Mongrel* [+]), Lithuania's **Laurynas Bareiša** (whose work *Drowning Dry* [+]) claimed Best Director and Best Acting Performance in Locarno last year) and Iranian directors **Raha Amirfazli** and **Alireza Ghasemi** (awarded last year's Best Director trophy in Sundance's World Cinema Dramatic competition via *In the Land of Brothers* [+]).

(The article continues below - Commercial information)



A great deal of interest can therefore be expected at the **European Film Market** (running 13 – 19 February), unspooling within the 75th **Berlinale**, since it will see **Virginie Devesa** and **Keiko Funato** selling their latest discovery, *Where the Night Stands Still* [+], which is Filipino director **Liryc Dela Cruz**'s first fiction feature film and which is set to be unveiled in the festival's new Perspectives section.

Written by the director, the story follows two Filipino sisters and their brother who are all domestic workers in Italy and who come together in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited. Shared memories and buried grievances soon come to the surface, however, putting their fragile relationship to the test... Stand-out names in the cast include **Tess Magallanes**, **Jenny Lianto Caringal** and **Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.**

"This film is a gem, not just for its cinematography but for its narrative structure too", stresses Virginie Devesa. "It speaks from the viewpoint of Filipino immigrants who have been living in Italy for over 20 years. Are they properly integrated? What is life like for them, living so far away from their home country as domestics for rich Italians? It's a film "noir" on a highly polarising subject to reflect upon. It was majority funded by Italy as well as a collective of artists called **Il Mio Filipino Collective**, which organises performances and numerous talks on this topic which impacts each and every social category, ranging from new generations of migrants to those who've been living in Italy for several decades."

Production of *Where the Night Stands Still* was outsourced to Pellicula (the filmmaker's own firm) in co-production with **Leonardo Birindelli** on behalf of Ozono, with the **Il Mio Filipino Collective** and with **Reckless Natarjan Pictures**.

ARTICLES

4 February 2025   **The Hollywood Reporter**  
Positive review  
[‘Where the Night Stands Still’ Explores Colonialism and the Filipino Psyche \(Exclusive Berlin Trailer\)](#)

## ARTICLES

"This film is a deeply personal exploration of the silent, corrosive legacy that colonialism has left on the Filipino psyche, its insidious power to fracture not only nations but also families and individuals," Dela Cruz says about the film. "I am examining how centuries of oppression, displacement, and survival have shaped the intimate dynamics of family, creating spaces where unresolved pain festers in silence."

Adds the filmmaker: "At its core, this film reflects a deeper, darker truth: when the oppressed internalize the violence of their oppressors, the result can be even more devastating."

The trailer gives a first glimpse of the film's black-and-white aesthetics and how little the characters have to tell each other.

*Where the Night Stands Still* stars Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal, and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr. It was produced by Pelircula, Ozono, and Il Mio Filipino Collective, with Reckless Natarajan Pictures co-producing. **Alpha Violet** is handling international sales.

Dela Cruz is an artist and filmmaker from the Southern Philippines and Rome, Italy. In 2023, his exhibition "IL Mio Filipino: For Those Who Care to See" in Rome focused on his multi-year research on "exhaustion, slavery, care, hospitality and colonial history of the Philippines."

Il Mio Filipino Collective is a collective of Filipino domestic and care workers, artists, community organizers, and members of the diaspora based in Italy. Its mission is "to collaborate, co-create and co-imagine with people and groups who are dedicated to fostering communities of resistance, care, and hospitality."

Watch the trailer for *Where the Night Stands Still* below.









ARTICLES



7 February 2025   **Screen International**  
Film mentioned in article  
[Berlin 2025: Screen’s guide to the Perspectives titles](#)

FEATURES


# Berlin 2025: Screen’s guide to the Perspectives titles

BY **SCREEN STAFF** | 7 FEBRUARY 2025






Screen staff preview all of the titles in the Berlin film festival’s new competitive Perspectives strand for international fiction feature debuts, which replaces the Encounters strand and comes with a €50,000 prize. The festival runs February 13-23.




SOURCE: BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL  
**‘LITTLE TROUBLE GIRLS’**


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MOST POPULAR



Amazon MGM’s ‘Jack Ryan’ feature starring John Krasinski and Sienna Miller preps UK shoot



‘Mr Burton’ review: Toby Jones stars in Richard Burton origins story



Oscars 2025 speeches: Sean Baker calls for indie film support, ‘No Other Land’ directors

**ARTICLES**

**Where The Night Stands Still (It-Phil)**

**Dir.** Liryc Dela Cruz

This black-and-white drama centres on three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, who meet in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited as shared memories and buried grievances put their relationship to the test. Philippines-born director Dela Cruz is based in Rome and took part in the Berlinale Talents development programme in 2020. *Where The Night Stands Still* is produced by Pelircula, Ozono and Il Mio Filippino Collective, in co-production with Reckless Natarajan Pictures.

**Contact:** [Alpha Violet](#)

*Profiles by: Flore Boitel, Ellie Calnan, Ben Dalton, Tim Dams, Elaine Guerini, Jeremy Kay, Rebecca Leffler, Orlando Parfitt, Michael Rosser, Matt Schley, Mona Tabbara, Silvia Wong*

ARTICLES

7 February 2025   **Screen International**  
Film listed in article  
[The lowdown on the Berlin Film Festival 2025 titles](#)

FEATURES

# The lowdown on the Berlin Film Festival 2025 titles

BY **SCREEN STAFF** | 12 FEBRUARY 2025

SOURCE: BERLINALE 2025 / SABRINA LANTOS / SONY PICTURES CLASSICS / NIKOS NIKOLOPOULOS / MUBI

[CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:] 'BLUE MOON', 'DREAMERS', 'PUNCHING THE WORLD', 'LATE SHIFT', 'HOT MILK', 'LITTLE TROUBLE GIRLS'

Artistic director Tricia Tuttle's inaugural Berlin Film Festival (February 13-23) opens with Tom Tykwer's *The Light* and features a host of arthouse stalwarts alongside new discoveries.

19 titles are set to play in its official Competition, including new films from Richard Linklater, Hong Sangsoo, Michel Franco and Radu Jude. US director Todd Haynes will preside over the jury for the festival.

**Scroll down for profiles**

Eight competition films are directed or co-directed by women – up from six last year – and nine filmmakers have screened their films in the Berlinale previously.

This year also sees the launch of the new competitive Perspectives strand for international fiction feature debuts, which replaces the Encounters strand, and comes with a €50,000 prize.

*Screen International* profiles the titles making their world or international premieres in Competition, Special and Special Gala, Panorama and Perspectives, and picks out highlights from the Generation, Forum and Panorama Documentary strands.

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- **That Summer In Paris** (Valentine Cadic)
- **Two Times Joao Liberada** (Paula Tomas Marques)
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- **Where The Night Stands Still** (Liryc Dela Cruz)



ARTICLES





10 February 2025 Tip Berlin (DE)



Film mentioned in article


FEATURES

# The lowdown on the Berlin Film Festival 2025 titles

BY SCREEN STAFF | 12 FEBRUARY 2025







SOURCE: BERLINALE 2025 / SABRINA LANTOS / SONY PICTURES CLASSICS / NIKOS NIKOLOPOULOS / MUBI

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13 February 2025 **Film TV (IT)**

Film mentioned in article  
[Berlin 2025: Like the Night, the Shadows of the Filipino Diaspora](#)

POST created theFebruary 13, 2025

# Berlin 2025: Like the Night, the Shadows of the Filipino Diaspora

by PC1979

In the Perspective section of the [Berlin Film Festival](#) , among the works that stand out for their artistic depth and the power of their message, **Come la notte** , the new film by Filipino-Italian director Liryc Dela Cruz, stands out. With an intimate and visually evocative narrative, the film explores the complex dynamics of the Filipino diaspora through the microcosm of a family marked by separation and sacrifice.

### A Night of Truth and Revelations

The story unfolds around three Filipino brothers, all domestic workers in Italy, who reunite in the villa inherited from their older sister, Lilia. The meeting, as long-awaited as it is feared, becomes a stage for old wounds, buried memories and grudges that have never completely subsided. The night bears witness to an internal and external struggle: affection mixes with frustration, the desire for connection clashes with the weight of absence. In a crescendo of emotional tensions, the film **Come la notte** unfolds between whispered dialogues and silences full of meaning, returning a poignant portrait of the migratory condition and the scars it leaves on family relationships.

[Like the Night \(2025\) : poster](#)

### A metaphor of the diaspora and its wounds

**Come la notte** is not only a family drama, but a broader reflection on Filipino history and identity. The director delves into the collective memory of his people, exposing the painful legacy of colonialism and its ability to fragment not only nations, but also the most intimate nuclei of society.

The villa where the film takes place takes on a symbolic value: it represents not only a refuge, but also an emotional prison, a place where the protagonists confront the ghosts of the past. The physical space becomes a mirror of their inner condition, a limbo in which nostalgia for their roots clashes with the reality of exile.

## ARTICLES

and its social implications.



*Like the Night* (2025) : Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano jr., Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal

### Talent and social commitment

*Come la notte* is produced by Pelírcula, the independent film platform founded by Dela Cruz himself, in collaboration with OZONO Studio and Reckless Natarajan Pictures. But what makes this project even more significant is the involvement of *Il Mio Filippino Collective*, an organization of Filipino domestic workers in Italy that has been fighting for migrants' rights for years. Their participation is not only symbolic: through the film *Come la notte*, their voice finds a space for expression, making the work not only an artistic product, but a political act of resistance.

The three main characters, Lilia, Rosa and Manny, are played by Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr., actors who with their performances manage to convey with extraordinary sensitivity the pain and hope of their characters. Their chemistry on screen helps make the narration even more authentic and moving.

### A necessary film

*Come la notte* is more than a film: it is a testimony, a reflection on the migratory condition, a denunciation of the silent violence of colonialism. Liryc Dela Cruz signs a work of extraordinary emotional and political power, capable of leaving a deep mark on the viewer.

In the darkness of the night, between whispers and silences, the most painful truths emerge. Yet, as the title suggests, it is precisely in the heart of the night that one can glimpse the dawn of a new awareness.

### ARTICLES

13 February 2025 **Siegeessäule Magazin (DE)**

Film mentioned in article

[All queer film highlights of the Berlinale 2025](#)



75TH BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

## All queer film highlights of the Berlinale 2025

13 Feb. 2025 Anniabelle Georgen and Frank Hermann



"Dreams in Nightmares" (2025), directed by Shatara Michelle Ford, starring: Dea Bing, Denée Benton, Sasha Comere.

Image : Po Wei Su / 11BW Films

**The 75th Berlinale runs from February 13th to 23rd and there are again numerous LGBTIQ\* films to discover. SIEGESSÄULE lists all the queer highlights for you**

This year, many LGBTIQ\* films will once again play a role at the Berlinale (February 13 - February 23, 2024): The Norwegian film "Dreams (Sex Love)" directed by Johan Haugerud has a chance of being chosen. Rosa von Praunheim once again surprises with irony and sarcasm in his new work "Satanic Pig". And director Luzia Schmid dedicates her clever portrait "I want everything. Hildegard Knef" to the restless and changeable life of Hildegard Knef.

On February 21st, the 39th Teddy Award, the official queer film award of the Berlin International Film Festival, will be presented at the Volksbühne.

Below we list all the feature films at the Berlinale that have a queer theme. If you click on the respective film title, you will see the screening times and film information on the Berlinale website. Ticket presales begin on Monday, February 10, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.



### ARTICLES

#### Perspectives: Debut Films

##### **"Two Times João Liberada"**

**Portugal, 2025, directed by Paula Tomás Marques**

Liberada is a gender-nonconforming person who was persecuted by the Inquisition in Portugal in the 18th century. The Portuguese actress João plays this character in a biopic. During filming, João and the director clash more and more violently because they have different views on Liberada. Strange events soon block the film project...

##### **Screenings:**

February 18th, 9:30 p.m., Stage Bluemax Theater

February 19th, 4:00 p.m., Cubix 9

February 20th, 6:30 p.m., Cubix 8

February 22nd, 12:30 p.m., Colosseum 1

February 23rd, 2:00 p.m., Cubix 9



"Janine moves to the country" (2025), directed by Jan Eilhardt, pictured: Janine Lear.

##### **"Janine Moves to the Country"**

**Germany, 2025, directed by Jan Eilhardt**

Back to the provinces! Together with her partner, Janine leaves Berlin for the village of her childhood. But on the dreary village streets, she is looked at askance and treated with hostility because of her queer appearance. A 360-degree look at a hostile environment.

##### **Screenings:**

February 18th, 6:30 p.m., Delphi Filmpalast

February 20th, 1:00 p.m., Cubix 8

February 22nd, 9:15 p.m., Zoo Palast 2

February 23rd, 4:00 p.m., Arsenal 1

##### **"Little Trouble Girls"**

**Slovenia, Italy, Croatia, Serbia, 2025, Director: Urška Djukić**

16-year-old Lucija joins the girls' choir at her Catholic school. There she befriends the popular, extroverted Ana Maria. When the choir travels to a monastery in the countryside for an intensive weekend of rehearsals, the girl begins to question her faith and values...

##### **Screenings:**

February 14, 6:30 p.m., Stage Bluemax Theater

February 15, 1:00 p.m., Cubix 9

February 16, 9:30 p.m., Cubix 8

February 17, 3:30 p.m., Colosseum 1

##### **"That Summer in Paris"**

**France, 2025, Director: Valentine Cadic**

In the summer of 2024, 30-year-old Blandine comes to Paris to watch the swimming competitions on site. She also hopes to meet her half-sister, with whom she has not had contact for years. In the exciting city, she meets other people and discovers a new freedom.

##### **Screenings:**

February 15th, 6:30 p.m., Stage Bluemax Theater

February 16th, 1:00 p.m., Cubix 9

February 17th, 9:30 p.m., Cubix 8

February 18th, 3:30 p.m., Colosseum 1

February 21st, 5:15 p.m., Cubix 9

##### **"Where the Night Stands Still"**

**Italy, Philippines, 2025, directed by Liryc Dela Cruz**

After years of separation, three siblings from the Philippines, all domestic servants in Italy, meet in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited. In the closed world of the villa, old memories, but also resentments, are awakened.

##### **Screenings:**

February 15, 9:30 p.m., Stage Bluemax Theater

February 16, 4:00 p.m., Cubix 9

February 17, 9:30 p.m., Cubix 5

February 23, 3:00 p.m., Colosseum 1

### ARTICLES

14 February 2025 **Frieze**

Film mentioned in article

[What to See During Berlin International Film Festival 2025](#)



## ARTICLES

Liryc Dela Cruz, *Where the Night Stands Still* (2025)



Liryc Dela Cruz, *Where the Night Stands Still*, 2025, film still

The first major shakeup of new festival director Tricia Tuttle's reign was to replace the adventurous if divisive 'Encounters' sidebar with 'Perspectives', a strand focused solely on narrative feature debuts. Ironically, *Where the Night Stands Still*, an elusive ghost story from Rome-based Filipino director Liryc Dela Cruz, would fit comfortably in either. Shot in startlingly crisp black and white, Dela Cruz's film follows a day in the life of émigré housekeeper Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal). Cruz shows her tending to a stately country home before revealing that she is now the owner, having recently inherited it from her former employer. Some spice is added to the mix with the arrival of Rosa's sister Lillia (Tess Magallanes) and brother Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.), neither of whom she's seen in years. Over 75 minutes, Dela Cruz allows the sociological and personal implications of Rosa's situation to germinate in the mind's eye while an uncanny tension builds amongst the siblings. This is slow cinema with a dark sense of humour and a nasty bite. – *Rory O'Connor*

*The 75th Berlin International Film Festival runs from 13–23 February 2025*



ARTICLES


15 February 2025 **Cineuropa**  
Positive review  
[Review: Where the Night Stands Still](#)

BERLINALE 2025 Perspectives

Review: *Where the Night Stands Still*

by **FABIEN LEMERCIER**

15/02/2025 - BERLINALE 2025: Liryc Dela Cruz plays with the shadows of exile and memory for a personal and controlled debut feature about Filipino siblings reuniting in Italy



Jenny Lianto Caringal, Tess Magallanes and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr in *Come la notte*

Director, screenwriter, director of photography, editor, set designer and producer; the least we can say is that Italy-based Filipino filmmaker **Liryc Dela Cruz** has invested himself totally into his debut feature film, demonstrating a vast palette of talents with *Where the Night Stands Still*, presented in the Perspectives section at the 75th **Berlinale**. In addition, the young filmmaker (he is 33) has also chosen to draw on a story very close to his roots and his exiled status to offer a bewitching film in black and white, fed by the ghosts of the past in an almost atemporal atmosphere where the karma of a family trio is slowly revealed.

(The article continues below - Commercial information)

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For those who don't know, Filipino immigration in Italy for domestic workers goes back decades (long before the arrival of Eastern Europeans) and Rome's Filipino community (often fervently Catholic) would come together on Sundays, for instance around the lake in the EUR neighbourhood, to keep the memory of their homeland alive, share food typical of their islands and discuss their present in service of the local bourgeoisie.

It is in this spirit yet far from the Italian capital that *Where the Night Stands Still* takes place, whose frame is a huge building surrounded by an immense park that Lila (**Tess Magallanes**), to her great surprise, has inherited after more than 35 years working for Mme Patricia, her Italian boss. "We'd become like sisters, like a family", explains the sexagenarian, who lives alone in the house, to her sister Rosa (**Jenny Lianto Caringal**) and her brother Manny (**Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr**), who have come from Rome to pay her a visit for the first time in years. "Big sister, we are your family, too", Rosa reminds her while Manny trembles under the stupor of the opportunity of this inheritance and the incomprehension of Lila's refusal to sell in order to finally be able to go back to the Philippines.

Very progressively, through playful walks in the garden, lunches on the autumnal grass and teas in the kitchen, the family visit transforms into a rediscovery of one another, for the door leading up to memories of suffering and sadness from their youth in Mansalay, secrets ("you can't imagine what I've been through"), regrets and resentments ("since we were little, she decides everything for us", "you destroyed me by bringing me here") is now open. And although "fights between siblings are normal", no one really knows what could come out of the shadows...

Made up of about thirty very beautiful static shots (with sophisticated and elegant play on depth of field, shadows and light), the film patiently (a quality that the spectator must also share) shapes a touching existential mirror about the corrosive toxicity of an economic exile on the long term, and which has the airs of modern slavery. In a morbid atmosphere that plays with contrasts, between the luxurious and peaceful comfort of the place and a mysterious, underlying tension, between materialism (the food, the inheritance, health) and mysticism (Christian faith, ghosts), Liryc Dela Cruz directs a story at once simple (the family constellation) and rather unusual (Filipinos in Italy) that, beyond its very solid formal mastery, even has a spectacular final twist in store.

*Where the Night Stands Still* was produced by Italian outfit **Pellicola** and co-produced by **Ozono**, Il Mio Filipino Collective and Reckless Natarjan Pictures. **Alpha Violet** handles international sales.



international title: **Where the Night Stands Still**

original title: **Come la notte**

country: **Italy, Philippines**

sales agent: **Alpha Violet**

year: **2025**

directed by: **Liryc Dela Cruz**

screenplay: **Liryc Dela Cruz**

cast: **Jenny Lianto Caringal, Tess Magallanes, Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.**

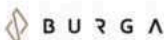
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15 February 2025 **Film Fest Report**

Positive review

[Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still \(dir. Liryc Dela Cruz\) | Review](#)

Berlinale 2025

## Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still (dir. Liryc Dela Cruz) | Review

 Michael Granados · 3 weeks ago

2 minutes read





 Jenny Lianto Carlingal, Tess Magallanes and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr. in Come la notte (Where the Night Stands Still) by Liryc Dela Cruz | @Walang Hanggan

### Liryc Dela Cruz explores the Filipino diaspora of three siblings in Italy, where a reunion reveals the true nature of fragile relationships.

After a couple of short and feature length documentaries, and working with [Lav Diaz](#) on his Golden Leopard winner, [From What is Before](#) (2014), Liryc Dela Cruz debuts his first fiction feature, [Where the Night Stands Still](#), in the inaugural Perspectives section at the [75th Berlinale](#). A man of many trades, Liryc serves as the director, writer, editor, cinematographer, producer, and production designer for his debut. Born in the Philippines, but based in Rome, Liryc, is a co-founder of the [Il Mio Filipino Collective](#), a group of Filipino artists, domestic and care workers, and cleaners who are dedicated to fostering communities of resistance, care, and hospitality. With his multi-faceted knowledge and cultural background, Liryc's fiction debut demonstrates a masterful use of economy and mise-en-scène where contemplation and family dynamics slowly simmer into a dramatic eruption.

The film focuses on three siblings under one location, that is the villa inherited by the Lillia, who worked for its former late owner, Patrizia, for over 35 years. Rosa and Manny, the two younger siblings who haven't seen Lillia in years, pays a visit and sparks troubled memories along with the struggle as immigrants in a foreign country. The minimal and simple approach Liryc distills is well suited for a low budget, first time feature including a single location, long takes, static camera placement, minimal, yet realistic dialogue, and heavily contrasted black and white imagery. One can see the influence of [Lav Diaz](#) due to the slow cinema parameters, but Liryc aims to provide a different perspective by offering a moralistic story about Filipino family relations, immigrant experiences, the homeland and identity.

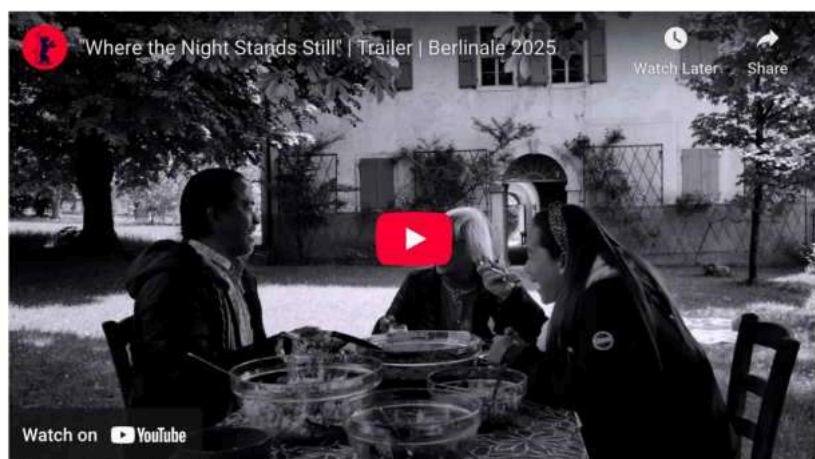
## ARTICLES



Tess Magallanes in Come la notte (Where the Night Stands Still) by Liryc Dela Cruz | © Walang Hanggan

As the three siblings catch up, the subtle tension builds through fragile egos, forgotten memories, and the hunt for survival. Liryc also explores the notion of the forgotten homeland through Lillia's inheritance. In the eyes of the siblings, Lillia appears to forget her Filipino roots due to her attachment of the villa (or Patrizia as her new family), causing an underlying strain on her real siblings. Manny and Rosa encourages her to sell the villa for a profit and move back to Philippines, but Lillia remains faithful towards the villa (and Patrizia). The disconnect between Lillia and the younger two are summarized through Manny's languish immigrant experience, where he'd rather struggle in the Philippines than in Italy because in his words, "Here and in the Philippines, we are slaves".

Liryc's crucial use of location drives the film's central figures into the deep trenches of their relationships. As the fourth unofficial character, the villa's value is viewed at from two different perspectives. From Lillia, a mixture of hard work, luck, and grace due to her intimate relationship with Patrizia. For Manny and Rosa, the villa is a gateway to escape their struggle of slavery. In an ultimate conclusion that shocks in an intensely dramatic fashion (similarly to Lav Diaz's [Norte, the End of History](#)), Liryc's act of subversiveness does not stray away from the human condition. With a patient and precise direction, Liryc's chamber room drama unveils the fragility of the human spirit through the Filipino diaspora.



Film Fest Report is an accredited media at the [75th Berlin International Film Festival](#).

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15 February 2025 **Filmmaker Mag**

Film mentioned in article

[“It Carries the Weight of Improvisation but Also Inevitability”: Liryc Dela Cruz on his Berlinale-premiering \*Where the Night Stands Still\* \(Come la Notte\)](#)

## “It Carries the Weight of Improvisation but Also Inevitability”: Liryc Dela Cruz on his Berlinale-premiering *Where the Night Stands Still* (Come la Notte)



by Lauren Wissot  
in Directors,  
Interviews  
on Feb 15, 2025

Berlinale 2025,  
Liryc Dela Cruz,  
Where the Night  
Stands Still

Liryc Dela Cruz's *Where the Night Stands Still* (Come la Notte) takes the simplest of storylines and renders it infinitely complex. Three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy who've not seen each other for years, reunite at an extravagant villa the elder sister inherited after the death of her longtime employer. They reminisce about childhood over Filipino delicacies the younger sister and brother have brought, and stroll the vast grounds that the new owner meticulously preserves as if she were still a servant and not the lady of the house. But as the languorous day draws to a close tensions build, conversations turn, and buried grievances emerge. All of which is meticulously captured in haunting B&W, the ghosts of the past present in every striking frame.

A few days prior to the February 15th Berlinale premiere of *Where the Night Stands Still* (Come la Notte), Filmmaker reached out to the film's director (and producer, writer, editor and DP), an artist with roots in both the Philippines and Rome, about his thrillingly auspicious feature-length debut.

**Filmmaker:** So how did this film originate? Did it grow out of your first solo exhibition, *Il Mio Filippino: For Those Who Care To See*?

**Dela Cruz:** Come la Notte was never supposed to be the Come la Notte that exists today. The film was shaped by an emergency the night before shooting, when before traveling to the location the original protagonist's son contracted COVID. In that moment everything shifted, and we had to rewrite the story on the way to the set. We drew from the shared narratives that have always been present in our conversations, lived experiences, hearsays, and the unspoken realities that circulate within the Filipino community in Italy.

This process of reconfiguration wasn't unfamiliar to us. My first solo exhibition, *Il Mio Filippino: For Those Who Care To See*, was also about disrupting fixed narratives and questioning how the Filipino laboring body is perceived in the West. That project engaged with archival images and performative gestures, but Come la Notte moves deeper into the emotional and psychological spaces of migration, estrangement, and the weight of unspoken histories.

In reworking the film under such urgent circumstances, we instinctively merged real stories with my literary references, and fragments of works that have shaped us. The result is something both deeply personal and collectively constructed. It carries the weight of improvisation, but also of inevitability, because these are stories we have always known. They live in our community, in our silences, in the way we endure. The film became what it needed to be, shaped by the very forces it seeks to explore: uncertainty, survival, and the constant act of rewriting oneself in a foreign land.

**Filmmaker:** Could you talk a bit about your relationship with Il Mio Filippino Collective, which is comprised of "Filippino domestic and care workers, artists, community organizers and members of the diaspora based in Italy," and collaborating with them on this film? I noticed your three protagonists all developed the story, and are credited as crew.

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by Natalia Keogan in Directors, Interviews, SXSW, SXSW Features  
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**Dela Cruz:** I cofounded Il Mio Filippino Collective unofficially with the cast members in 2018, alongside fellow domestic workers, artists, and community organizers in Italy. Then in 2020, we formalized the collective. The primary concern of the collective was to challenge and recenter the narrative regarding the invisibility of care and domestic workers as a major workforce in Italy and other Western countries. A key figure in shaping both the collective and this film is Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr., who plays Manny. Beyond his role in the film, he is a committed community organizer in Rome. He was the one who connected me to many members of the collective.

I, too, have done domestic work in Italy. This reality is not foreign to me; it informs my perspective and my practice. Because of our shared experiences, working on *Come la Notte* felt intuitive. We have known each other for years, collaborated in performances, and built trust through artistic and community work. I deeply respect the intelligence and creativity of my collaborators. They allow me to be the wild crazy kid that I was when I met them, while also holding me with care, patience and love. With them I've learned more about what it means to be human.

The process itself was fluid and organic. On the first day of shooting, I was still handling almost everything. But soon they fell into rhythm with me, understanding the cadence of how I imagined the film. Most of the dialogue felt natural because it came from words we've spoken, overheard, or carried with us. I encouraged them to interpret their characters freely, using their own instincts and histories as primary tools. This unstructured approach, where the film unfolded through intuition rather than rigid planning, became an act of emancipation. I credited them in developing the story because it was shaped in realtime. On set, we were constantly discussing, reworking, and pulling from past conversations. I would recall something from our shared moments and ask if they could inject it into their characters or use it as a narrative device. We were a small crew, just five people, so multitasking was essential, much like in our performances.

But beyond practicality, this way of working was transformative. It proved that Filipinos are not confined to the reductive roles the West has assigned us. The "Filippino" are more than what racist and colonial structures dictate; we are artists, storytellers, and creators of our own myths.

**Filmmaker:** In addition to being an artist and filmmaker you also founded a production company, Pelircula, which is expanding internationally. So what sorts of projects are you developing?

**Dela Cruz:** We want to examine how power constructs identities, how myth and propaganda shape reality, and how colonial legacies continue to manifest in the present. One of our upcoming projects, *Paradiso Orientale*, explores the fabrication of the Tasaday tribe in 1971, and how figures like the late Italian actress Gina Lollobrigida were used to legitimize this Marcosian spectacle. The film follows Donatella, an Italian actress who, after documenting the tribe, returns home only to experience a haunting physical decay, her body rotting as if cursed by the lies of history. It's something very close to me because Gina Lollobrigida went precisely to my hometown of South Cotabato in Mindanao, Philippines during that period. So it excites me a lot to bridge this story.

**Filmmaker:** I'm also curious to hear how audiences from Western countries versus viewers from colonized nations respond to your work. Are your messages different for each?



### ARTICLES

**Dela Cruz:** The responses are often quite different, though not always in the ways one might expect. Viewers who share the same sentiments with us, especially people who have a strong colonial history, often recognize the weight of history and labor in our works intuitively. They see their own families, their own stories, even in the silences. There's less need to explain the nuances of migration, care work or colonial residue — it's already part of their lived experience. Sometimes they tell us our works make them feel seen; other times it reopens wounds they've been trying to forget. Either way there's a deep, visceral recognition.

Western audiences, on the other hand, often approach our works with a certain distance. Some are deeply engaged, especially those attuned to decolonial thought, while others struggle with the contemplative rhythms or the lack of clear exposition. There's sometimes a tendency to exoticize or intellectualize the Filipino experience rather than feel it. But I don't shape my films or work differently for them. I don't believe in translating or diluting for a Western gaze. The work remains the same. It's rooted in Filipino experiences, told in our rhythms. If Western audiences truly want to listen, they have to meet the film where it stands.

That said, I do find it interesting when Western viewers connect with the themes of alienation, family fractures, and longing. It reminds me that, despite the vast differences in history and privilege, displacement, whether literal or emotional, is something many people carry in different ways.

**Filmmaker:** Finally, what are your — and the Collective's — ultimate hopes for the film (which you refer to as a "cautionary tale" in your director's statement)?

**Dela Cruz:** Our hope for *Come la Notte* is that it exists as both a whisper and a cautionary tale. A whisper because it speaks in quiet moments of siblings who can no longer find the language to bridge the distances between them, of bodies that carry the weight of history without knowing how to set it down.

The film is a microcosm of the world we live in, a reflection of a larger darkness. We like to believe that we have moved forward, that history is behind us, that the violence of the past belongs to another time. But the night is still here. The same forces that uproot, erase and consume remain at work, only shifting their masks. Is the world truly changing, or have we simply become better at looking away? If we are no longer haunted by ghosts, is it because the ghosts have stepped fully into the light? We call it a cautionary tale because it confronts us with a question: If we claim to be post-colonial, post-dictatorship, post-trauma, why does the architecture of violence remain intact? If history is cyclical, does that mean it is inevitable, or does it mean we have failed to intervene?


### ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **International Cinephile Society**

Positive review

[Berlinale 2025 review: Where the Night Stands Still \(Liryc Dela Cruz\)](#)



 international cinephile society

HOME NEWS REVIEWS FESTIVALS ESSAYS FEATURES AWARDS MORE

"Evocative drama in which Dela Cruz examines familial dynamics in exceptional detail."

★★★★☆


In a sprawling manor home in some pastoral region of the Italian countryside, three siblings gather under quite unconventional circumstances. The home is decaying and seemingly filled with endless corridors, most of which have remained unexplored – but for one of the siblings this is her new home. A fact that both excites and exhausts her brother and sister, leading to some unexpected friction between them. This is the impetus behind *Where the Night Stands Still* (*Come la notte*), in which director Liryc Dela Cruz – in his narrative feature directorial debut – tells the story of a family of siblings originally from the Philippines who find themselves spending some time in each other's company after one of them inherits the enormous home of her employer, for whom she worked as a cleaner and housekeeper for years. Suddenly she transitions from humble immigrant to wealthy landowner, something that does not quite enthrall her siblings who have pursued similar paths in their own lives, but have yet to reap such enormous rewards. A simple and evocative drama in which Dela Cruz examines familial dynamics in exceptional detail, *Where the Night Stands Still* is a well-constructed, intimate depiction of a set of siblings undergoing an investigation of their own souls, leading to a simultaneously anxious and stunning character study.

Dela Cruz lays out the foundation of *Where the Night Stands Still* from the first moments, but doesn't provide us with all the context we need until a few scenes have elapsed. This forces us to use the paltry information we have been given to figure out the base of the story and what it represents. This is a film about identity and displacement, revolving around three characters who each have their own ambitions and desires and are only connected by their familial bond, which we soon discover means very little when it comes to the matter at hand. Their initial reunion is layered with a steady sense of pressure, almost as if they have been forced to spend time together in the hopes of resolving some unstated tension that none of them necessarily wants to address directly, and which eventually manifests in their personal examinations of their identity. This isn't a traditional immigrant story, and almost seems like a fable – the most hardworking and dedicated of the trio is also the most vulnerable to malicious actions by her vindictive siblings, who have no qualms in using her as a pawn for their own personal gain – and the fable eventually flourishes into a quietly disconcerting glimpse into the minds of people trying to find a home for themselves far from their place of origin, reconciling their present desires while plumbing the emotional depths of the past.

*Where the Night Stands Still* is a conceptual film rather than one that lends itself to a detailed discussion on form, in which plot mechanics are more important than their realization. However, it is still beautifully made in terms of the visual approach – the film is shot in stunning, crisp black-and-white, and Dela Cruz relishes exploring the grandiosity of the decrepit, decaying mansion that gradually becomes a character all on its own, a living entity that is as fascinating as its residents, and with which we form quite a peculiar relationship. However, it's the director's approach to looking at certain themes that draws the viewer into this film, with the promise of a simple story of three siblings reuniting under unconventional circumstances being the primary allure. The film is methodically paced and requires some degree of patience – there are long stretches without any dialogue and an abundance of repetition that can feel out of place at first but ultimately panders to the idea of the director seeking out the beauty in the banality. Several minutes of wordless domestic chores or the meandering exploration of the vast mansion are rendered as utterly transfixing, especially in how this intermingles with the growing sense of tension that simmers among the three main characters, all of whom seem to be quietly anticipating the moment when their fragile, volatile relationships fall apart.

*Where the Night Stands Still* is a well-crafted, intriguing film that doesn't necessarily leap out at the viewer, but rather gradually flourishes into a quiet, effective story of family, and how blood is not necessarily thicker than water when greed and desire take control. At only 75 minutes the film is slightly too short, since there were many possible avenues of these relationships that the film could have explored. Particularly since there is a fascinating richness to how Dela Cruz constructs these characters, and the performances from Jenny Uanto Caringal, Tess Magallanes and Benjamin Vasquez Barcelano Jr. are all compelling enough for us to yearn for a more in-depth investigation into their dynamic. Yet, the decision to leave many of these elements unresolved and incomplete does leave an impression, especially since the entire purpose of this film was to make the viewers feel like unintentional voyeurs, peering into a few moments in the lives of these siblings, forcing us to make our own unique observations and interpretations of various decisions they each make. A simple, unfurnished drama about familial bonds and the human connection, *Where the Night Stands Still* is quite effective, examining the internal lives of these characters as they navigate the ambiguous space between the past and the present, each moment somehow bringing them physically closer while distancing them further than ever before when it comes to their more symbolic bonds.

Image copyright: Wölang Honggan

 More


This entry was posted in 2025 - Berlin, Berlin, Reviews and tagged Benjamin Vasquez Barcelano Jr., Berlin International Film Festival, Berlinale, Jenny Uanto Caringal, Liryc Dela Cruz, Tess Magallanes, Where the Night Stands Still. Bookmark the permalink.

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ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **Overly Honest Reviews**  
Mixed review  
[A Quiet Storm of Emotion and Memory](#)



BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FILM FESTIVAL

### A Quiet Storm of Emotion and Memory

Chris Jones — February 15, 2025

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**MOVIE REVIEW**

Where the Night Stands Still (Come la notte)

**NOT RATED** — ★★☆☆☆

Genre: Drama

Year Released: 2025

Runtime: 1h 15m

Director(s): Liryc Dela Cruz

Writer(s): Liryc Dela Cruz

Cast: Jenny Llanto Caringal, Tess Magallanes, Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.

Where To Watch: shown at the 2025 Berlin International Film Festival

NOISE Film & TV | Rapenburgerstraat 109 | 1011 VL Amsterdam (NL)  
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### ARTICLES

**RAVING REVIEW:** WHERE THE NIGHT STANDS STILL is a movie that aims to make you feel something profound, but whether that feeling lands depends entirely on the viewer. It's built around a quiet, contemplative story about three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, who reunite in their late sister's villa. Throughout a single night, they navigate unspoken tensions, buried emotions, and the heavy weight of a past that refuses to stay buried. The film leans heavily into its minimalist approach—subtle performances, sparse dialogue, and long, lingering shots meant to emphasize everything that isn't being said. Some will find it poetic; others, like myself, might feel it's more about aesthetics than storytelling.

One thing that stands out immediately is how much effort is put into making every frame feel meaningful. The cinematography is deliberate, with careful framing that creates a sense of isolation between the characters even when they share the same space. The lighting is striking, playing with contrast to mirror the emotional and psychological distance between them. It's easy to appreciate how much thought went into the visuals, but at times, it feels like the film is trying so hard to be artistic that it forgets to engage with its characters.

The performances are undoubtedly strong, but the film's insistence on restraint keeps them from exploring the potential I think was there. Every glance and pause is loaded with meaning, but there are moments where the story would have benefited from more raw emotion. The actors clearly understand their roles and deliver solid performances, but the film seems hesitant to let them fully explore the depth of these relationships.

The film explores displacement, identity, and the lasting effects of colonialism through the lens of a single family. The villa is a perfect metaphor for this—grand, European, and a space that technically belongs to them but never truly feels like theirs. The film does a great job of entwining these themes into the story, making it clear that the characters' struggles are personal and tied to a much larger history.

One area where the film could have developed the siblings' identities further is in developing their identities outside of their shared grief. We get hints of their lives beyond this moment—fragments of their struggles and experiences in Italy—but never enough to make them feel like their own characters. A stronger focus on their journeys would have made their interactions even more compelling, giving more weight to the tension between them.

WHERE THE NIGHT STANDS STILL is undeniably well-crafted, it's also a film that requires the right mindset to be appreciated fully. It's not bad—it just didn't connect with me as it wanted to. Some will see it as a beautifully understated meditation on loss and identity, while others may find it a bit too calculated in its artistry. If you're drawn to films prioritizing mood and symbolism over direct narration, there's plenty to admire here. But if you're looking for something that grabs you emotionally and doesn't let go, this might not be the experience you're hoping for.



ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **Screen Daily (in print article)**  
Film listed in article  
Screenings: Where the Night Stands Still



**FESTIVAL**  
**12:15**  
**MICKEY 17**  
(US, South Korea) 137mins.  
Warner Bros. English language.  
German subtitles. Dir: Bong Joon  
Ho. Cast: Robert Pattinson, Naomi  
Ackie, Steven Yeun, Toni Collette,  
Mark Ruffalo.  
*The unlikely hero, Mickey  
Barnes, has found himself in the  
extraordinary circumstance of  
working for an employer who  
demands the ultimate commitment  
to the job... to die, for a living.*  
**Berlinale Special**  
**Orania press allowed**

Stavros Triantafyllidis, Natalia Swift, Papi  
Semirloglou, Ioko Ioannis Kotidis,  
Emmanuel Eliotzeu.  
*Chloe leaves her family behind and joins  
a group of teenagers crossing Greece.  
On her journey, she helps poor people  
in unconventional ways and starts to  
wonder if tenderness is the ultimate act  
of rebellion.*  
**Generation**  
**Cubix 6 press allowed**

**SATANIC SOW**  
(Germany) 85mins. German language.  
English subtitles. Dir: Rosa von  
Praunheim. Cast: Armin Dallapiccola,  
Justus Herrmann, Nico Ehrentzeit,  
Katy Karrenbauer, Gerhard Haase-  
Hindenberg.  
*Rosa von Praunheim is the satanic sow,  
incarnated by the wanton actor Armin  
Dallapiccola. A poetic compendium of  
life and death with pushy foxes, the Good  
Lord, lovers and Ronal's horrified mother.*  
**Panorama**  
**Cubix 7 press allowed**

**10:30**  
**CICADAS**  
(Germany, France) 100mins. Beta  
Cinema. German, French, English  
language. English subtitles. Dir:  
Ina Weisse. Cast: Nina Hoss, Saskia

Rosendahl, Vincent Macaigne, Greta  
Richter, Theorien Merien.  
*Isabell is struggling to look after her  
ageing parents and facing a crumbling  
marriage when she meets single mother  
Anja. The new connection forces her  
to confront the fragility of her carefully  
constructed world.*  
**Panorama**  
**Haus der Berliner Festspiele press allowed**

**11:45**  
**WHAT MARIELE KNOWS**  
(Germany) 86mins. Lucky Number.  
German, French language. English,  
German subtitles. Dir: Frédéric  
Hansbäck. Cast: Julia Jentsch, Felix  
Kraemer, Lami Gieseler, Mehmet Ateşçi,  
Moritz Treutefeld.  
*Julia and Tobias discover their daughter  
Marielle has developed telepathic abilities  
and can see and hear everything they do.  
This leads to situations ranging from the  
awkward to the absurd as uncomfortable  
truths are revealed.*  
**Competition**  
**Berlinale Palast press only**

**12:45**  
**MICKEY 17**  
See box, above

**12:30**  
**CHRISTY**  
(Ireland, UK) 94mins. Charades. English  
language. English, German subtitles.  
Dir: Brendan Carty. Cast: Daisy Powes,  
Darrmaid Noyes, Eiríra Wills.  
*Two estranged brothers with acquired  
childhoods in the care system suddenly  
find themselves living under the same  
roof. They must now reconcile with  
their pasts and make decisions about  
the future.*  
**Generation**  
**Zoe Palast 1 press allowed**

**GROWING DOWN**  
(Hungary) 85mins. Goodellas.  
Hungarian language. English subtitles.

Dir: Bálint Dániel Sós. Cast: Szabolcs  
Hajdu, Agoston Sáfárny, Anna Haj,  
Zsuzsa Jakab-Ágoston, Zsófia Szamosi.  
*Sándor, a widower, is the only witness  
to a serious accident involving his  
stepdaughter and his young son. Now  
he faces a dilemma: should he tell the  
truth and live with the consequences?  
Or lie and save his son from juvenile  
detention?*  
**Perspectives**  
**Colosseum 1 press allowed**

**HOUSES**  
(Israel, Germany) 98mins. Hebrew,  
Russian language. English subtitles.  
Dir: Veronika Nicole Tetelbaum. Cast:  
Yael Eisenberg, Tih Sharon, Evgenia  
Drodina.  
*Sasha is non-binary and came to Israel  
from the Soviet Union as a child in the  
1990s. Haunted by memories, they visit  
the houses they used to live in. A quiet  
meditation in black and white on what  
it means to feel at home in a house, a  
body, and in time.*  
**Forum**  
**Cubix 8 press allowed**

**PUNKU**  
(Peru, Spain) 132mins. Spanish,  
Quechua, Machiguenga language.  
English subtitles. Dir: JD Fernández  
Molero. Cast: Marcelo Quiroz, Maritza  
Katigari, Ricardo Delgado, Hugo Suckler.  
*Iván is found unconscious with an  
injured eye in the jungle. As Meshtia  
reunites him with his family, she is  
drawn into a foreboding journey.  
A disturbing look at Peru's cultural  
contradictions shot on a coarse mix of  
analog and digital formats.*  
**Forum**  
**Arsenal 1 press allowed**

**UNDER THE FLAGS, THE SUN**  
(Paraguay, Argentina, US, France,  
Germany) 90mins. Guaraní, Spanish,  
German, French, English, Portuguese  
language. English subtitles. Dir:  
Juanjo Puentes.  
*This fully archival journey through  
the 35 years of Alfredo Stroessner's*

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### ARTICLES

regime in Paraguay reveals unseen footage and explores one of the longest-running dictatorships in history, whose effects still resonate today.

Panorama

Stage Bluemax Theater **press allowed**

12:45

#### ONLY ON EARTH

(Denmark, Spain) 93mins. Autlook. Spanish, Galician language. English, German subtitles. Dir: Robin Petré.

*A visually stunning journey into southern Galicia, one of the most wildfire-prone zones in Europe, where humans and animals alike are struggling to cope with the hottest, driest summer on record.*

Generation

Filmtheater am Friedrichshain **press allowed**

#### THE ICE TOWER

(France, Germany) 118mins. Goodfellas. French language. English, German subtitles. Dir: Lucile Hadžihalilović. Cast: Marion Cotillard, Clara Pacini, August Diehl, Gaspar Noé, Marine Gesbert.

*Colder than ice, her kiss pierces the heart... The 1970s. Jeanne, a young runaway, falls under the spell of Cristina, the enigmatic star of 'The Snow Queen', a film which is being shot in the studio where Jeanne has taken refuge.*

Competition

Über Eats Music Hall **press allowed**

13:00

#### DEAF

(Spain) 99mins. Latido Films. Spanish, Spanish Sign Language. English subtitles. Dir: Eva Libertad. Cast: Miriam Garlo, Álvaro Cervantes, Elena Irureta, Joaquín Notario.

*Ángela, a deaf woman, is expecting a child with her hearing partner, Héctor. The baby's arrival causes a crisis in their relationship, forcing Ángela to face the challenges of raising her daughter in a world which is not made for her.*

Panorama

Cubix 7 **press allowed**

#### DREAMS

(Mexico) 100mins. The Match Factory. English, Spanish language. English, German subtitles. Dir: Michel Franco. Cast: Jessica Chastain, Isaac Hernández, Rupert Friend, Marshall Bell, Eligio Meléndez, Mercedes Hernández. *Believing his lover will support him, a young Mexican ballet dancer crosses the border to pursue his dreams in San Francisco. But as ambition and love clash with harsh realities, he must face the true nature of their relationship.*

Competition

HKW 1 — Miriam Makeba Auditorium **press allowed**

#### IRACEMA

(Brazil, Federal Republic of Germany) 96mins. Portuguese language. English subtitles. Dir: Jorge Bodanzky, Orlando Senna. Cast: Edna de Cássia, Paulo César



#### FESTIVAL

13:15

#### SANDBAG DAM

(Croatia, Lithuania, Slovenia) 88mins. Croatian language. English subtitles. Dir: Čejan Černić Čanak. Cast: Lav Novosel, Andrija Žunac, Leon Grgić, Franka Mikolaci, Tanja Smoje, Alma Prica, Filip Sovagović, Luka Baškarad. *In a village on the brink of flooding, Marko's life is turned upside down when Slaven returns for his father's funeral and rekindles their forbidden romance. Marko must confront his family and make a difficult choice.*

Generation

Cubix 6 **press allowed**

Peréio, Lúcio Dos Santos, Conceição Senna, Elma Martins, Orlando Senna. *A young Indigenous woman leaves the village for the city. Cinema Novo, hybrid fiction, road trip and an ecological avant-garde perspective, Iracema shows that trees, animals and people were already being destroyed by extractivist capitalism 50 years ago.*

Forum

Zoo Palast 2 **press allowed**

#### PAUL

(Canada) 87mins. French, English language. English subtitles. Dir: Denis Côté.

*Struggling with depression and social anxiety, Paul has found refuge in serving women who invite him to clean their homes. By sharing his gently eccentric routines on social media, he combats loneliness and takes it one day at a time.*

Panorama

Cubix 5 **press allowed**

#### PUNCHING THE WORLD

(Germany) 110mins. Newen Connect. The Yellow Affair. German language. English subtitles. Dir: Constanze Klau. Cast: Anton Franke, Camille Moltzen,

Anja Schneider, Christian Nätke, Johannes Scheidweiler, Sammy Scheuritzel, Tilmann Döbler, Moritz Hoyer.

*The childhood of two brothers, Philipp and Tobi, growing up in the East German provinces is scarred by the disintegration of their family, the lack of prospects in the region and role models who promise adventure but cross moral and legal boundaries.*

Perspectives

Cubix 9 **press allowed**

13:15

#### SANDBAG DAM

See box, left

14:00

#### ALL I HAD WAS NOTHINGNESS

(France) 94mins. mk2 Films. French, English, German, Polish language. English subtitles. Dir: Guillaume Ribot. Cast: Guillaume Ribot.

*Forty years after the release of Claude Lanzmann's monumental film 'Shoah', Guillaume Ribot reveals the director's relentless pursuit to tell the untold, using only Lanzmann's words and unseen footage from the masterpiece.*

Berlinale Special

Haus der Berliner Festspiele **press allowed**

15:00

#### CANONE EFFIMERO

(Italy) 120mins. Italian language. English subtitles. Dir: Gianluca De Serio, Massimiliano De Serio. *Moving through Italy's regions, the De Serio brothers come across an alternative popular culture and shoot a square-shaped film about polyvocal songs, music ethnology and oral tradition. Radically contemporary, energetic, close to nature, local. Lyrical.*

Forum

Delphi Filmpalast **press allowed**

#### GIRLS ON WIRE

(People's Republic of China) 115mins. Films Boutique, Mandarin language. English, German subtitles. Dir: Vivian Qu. Cast: Liu Haoqun, Wen Qi, Zhang Youhao, Zhou You, Peng Jing, Yang Haoyu, Liu Yitai, Geng Le. *Tian Tian, the single mother of a five-year-old daughter, kills a drug dealer and is then pursued for vengeance. The only person she can turn to for help is her female cousin, Fang Di.*

Competition

Berlinale Palast **press allowed**

#### WHAT'S NEXT?

(Hong Kong, China) 72mins. Without dialogue language. English subtitles. Dir: Cao Yiwen.

*Made by one woman with the help of an AI image generator, this animation dreams up a world before and after the arrival of evil. With no dialogue and a meditative soundtrack, it embraces the kitsch and utter strangeness of images hallucinated by machines.*

Forum

Kino Betonhalle@Silent Green **press allowed**

15:30

#### AFTER THIS DEATH

(US) 96mins. CAA. English, Spanish language. English subtitles. Dir: Lucio Castro. Cast: Mia Maestro, Lee Pace, Rupert Friend, Gwendoline Christie, Philip Ettinger.

*A woman's affair with an enigmatic underground musician throws her life into chaos when he disappears. Forced to fend off his obsessive fans, she also has to confront her fractured marriage, and reclaim her identity and her future.*

Berlinale Special

Stage Bluemax Theater **press only**

#### LITTLE TROUBLE GIRLS

(Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Serbia) 89mins. Heretic. Slovenian language. English

### ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **Screen Daily**





Positive review


[‘Where The Night Stands Still’ review: Modest Filipino domestic helper drama is set in rural Italy](#)

REVIEWS


## ‘Where The Night Stands Still’ review: Modest Filipino domestic helper drama is set in rural Italy

BY JONATHAN ROMNEY | 15 FEBRUARY 2025





Tagalog-language black-and-white film bows in Berlin's Perspectives



SOURCE: BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL  
‘WHERE THE NIGHT STANDS STILL’

Dir/scr. Liryc Dela Cruz. Italy/Philippines 2025. 75mins

The tensions of exile and servitude are played out in deceptively low-key fashion in *Where The Night Stands Still*, an Italy-set Tagalog-language three-hander from Filipino director Liryc Dela Cruz. Featured in Berlinale's Perspectives section, the film is finely acted, elegantly executed and seemingly undemonstrative, but its thematic density will leave audiences musing after a resonant open ending. Brevity and modest scale will make for limited exposure, but niche outlets should take to this showcase for a rising directorial talent.

### Finely acted, elegantly executed and seemingly undemonstrative

*Where The Night Stands Still* is the first full-length fiction from Dela Cruz, noted as a gallery artist as well as a film-maker, and a sometime associate of Filipino auteur Lav Diaz. There are echoes of Diaz here, not least in the long takes and use of fixed camera, as well as in Dela Cruz's own high-contrast black and white photography. But this very succinct piece has its own feel and thematics – and a dramatic language with more than a touch of Chekhov, in its musing on an old order that is passing while its tainted legacy remains.


The film begins with a close-up of a white-haired woman, Lilia (Tess Magallanes), shadows flickering over her face to the accompaniment of something that might be the wind, distant industrial noise, or perhaps a mental state manifested as sound. We see Lilia moving around the large house where she lives in rural Italy, first kneeling at a makeshift shrine in her bedroom offering prayers for her late employer Signora Patrizia; then strolling in the large garden, carefully sweeping leaves from a passageway (the time is apparently a sunny early autumn) and cleaning a staircase. Lilia now owns the estate, bequeathed to her by Patrizia, her employer of 35 years who died during the Covid-19 pandemic. Lilia nevertheless still considers herself duty-bound to keep the house as Patrizia would have wanted – suggesting that her state of servitude has only been extended indefinitely.

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
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### ARTICLES

Eventually Lilia, who is in her 60s, is visited by younger siblings Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal) and Manny (Benjamin Vasques Barcellano Jr). In the initially leisurely discussions that follow their arrival – including a 10-minute single-take scene over an *al fresco* lunch – the three talk about the past, Lilia's recent life alone, their shared experience of exile (all three left the Philippines to work in Italy) and the possible future. Rosa and Manny are mightily impressed by the good fortune of their 'Ate' (big sister) but, it emerges, somewhat resentful too – notably Manny, whose employment history has recently been rocky.

The drama plays out in a muted, strictly realist register, but Dela Cruz also places stylistic touches that introduce notes of dream-like ambivalence: notably, two shots of unidentified lights glowing hazily in the dark, with strange accretions of sound welling up in the background (Antonio Giannantonio's elusive, textured sound design is a key element throughout).

Taking its own slow-burning time to build, the film appears to be more an extended sketch of character relations than a narrative per se (the three actors, together with Sheryl Aluan, are credited with contributing to the story). It is only at the very end that a significant event occurs with startling abruptness – before a wordless, markedly theatrical final shot ends the drama on an interrogative note.

Dela Cruz's own black and photography (he also acts as producer, editor and production designer) emphasises high contrast and careful, sometimes surprising compositions – notably a semi-abstract shot from above, as the brooding Manny walks past a strange, seemingly ceremonial circle of white stones. Closing with a dedication to the global multitude of domestic workers from the Philippines, the film is informed by the legacy of colonialism. But Dela Cruz's decision to dramatise the theme in such a low-key, even visually lyrical fashion makes it all the more troubling for the understated tremors of unease it creates.

Production companies: Pelircula, Il Mio Filippino Collective

International sales: Alpha Violet, [info@alphaviolet.com](mailto:info@alphaviolet.com)

Producer: Liryc Dela Cruz

Screenplay: Liryc Dela Cruz

Cinematography: Liryc Dela Cruz

Editor: Liryc Dela Cruz

Production design: Liryc Dela Cruz

Main cast: Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal, Benjamin Vasques Barcellano Jr

 Berlin Europe Festivals Italy Perspectives Reviews




ARTICLES

15 February 2025 Asian Movie Pulse  
Positive review  
[Film Review: Where the Night Stands Still \(2025\)](#)  
by [Liryc Dela Cruz](#)

Berlinale-Filipino Reviews-Reviews

Film Review: Where the Night Stands Still (2025) by Liryc Dela Cruz






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“Where the Night Stands Still” is an exercise in minimalist storytelling

Set in an Italian villa, “Where the Night Stands Still” is an exercise in minimalist storytelling. Three Filipino migrant siblings gather in a mansion inherited by the oldest of them, Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal). The other two are Lilia (Tess Magallanes) and Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barceliano Jr.). They decide to visit their sister, seemingly just to check up on her. However, their true, poorly veiled intentions, soon come to the fore. Villa is to be sold, so that all three can return to their home country and enjoy an unlikely fortune which Rosa obtained.

Where the Night Stands Still is sceening at Berlin International Film Festival



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### ARTICLES

The opening sequences confusingly set up a different film however. We see the protagonist lying in a bed covered by a mosquito net. She then proceeds to pray and converse with the (as we soon learn) dead Madam Patrizia. The woman was a previous owner of the villa, which, due to a lack of possible inheritors, was passed onto her maid, Rosa. Despite the acquired wealth, the Filipina acts as if nothing had changed. She wanders around the vast, empty spaces, cleans them up, eats in loneliness and, strangely, listens to what sounds like podcasts about American politics.

The first act of "Where the Night Stands Still" captures Rosa's apathy and, perhaps, grief after her previous boss. This is reinforced by the black and white, precisely composed cinematography. The task-juggling director-screenwriter-producer, [Liryc Dela Cruz](#), worked also as a DoP on the project, which makes the carefully framed film all the more impressive. By juggling between high contrast imagery and more chiaroscuro tones, Dela Cruz creates a sensual and intimate work.

Often times Rosa is observed (or rather, surveilled) in wide angle shots, surrounded by door frames or windows, which add to the complexity of her character. The villa sometimes has serene and bucolic qualities, to then turn into a more oppressive and claustrophobic environment. The static shots, with deep depth of field, seem to devour the vast spaces all at once. Engulfed by them, Rosa seems out of place. Dela Cruz often looks for ways to capture the natural light entering the rooms, perhaps the only sources of dynamism in the whole building. The villa the protagonist inhabits, and, by extension, her entire world, seems not only still, but actually stale.



Once the siblings arrive, and initial pleasantries are exchanged, the core conflict of the film is revealed. Rosa wants to keep the word she gave to Madam Patrizia, and plans to maintain the building. Lilia and Manny don't see much sense in it and try to maneuver her into selling the mansion. The director slowly peels off the layers of the conflict between the three characters. This is, however, done in a clunky way through dialogues which often are far too direct and descriptive. Although the opening sequences were enigmatic and confusing, the rest of the film lacks that quality. The characters' intentions are overt, which saps all the tension from an otherwise interesting psychodrama.

The film still remains an interesting work negotiating the complexity of migrant experience. While the stylistic affinities with Lav Diaz's cinema are difficult to not notice, there is a change of pace and storytelling techniques in the second part of the film. With the arrival of demoralised siblings of Rosa, "Where the Night Stands Still" turns from a meditative piece to a rushed tale about greed and family dysfunction.

Tags: Berlin International Film Festival, Liryc Dela Cruz, Where the Night Stands Still

ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **Cinecittà (IT)**  
Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz  
'Come la notte'. The Filipino community in Italy in Liryc Dela Cruz's debut



**'Come la notte'. The Filipino community in Italy in Liryc Dela Cruz's debut**

Interview with the Founding Director of 'My Filipino Collective'

FEBRUARY 15, 2025 — BERLIN 2025

After years of separation, three Filipino brothers, all domestic workers in Italy, meet in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited. As the night deepens, the long-awaited reunion awakens old memories but also unspoken resentments. The air is heavy with the weight of what has been left unfinished over time, as the brothers try to bridge the distance that has grown between them. In the stillness of the villa, they struggle with an inexpressible pain as their shared history unravels in fragments and reveals subtle but profound signs of absence, envy and broken bonds. 'Come la notte', directed by Liryc Dela Cruz, premiered in the Perspectives section at the 75th Berlinale.

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Erma Pictures  
FEBRUARY 15, 2025

## ARTICLES

15 February 2025 **Italy for Movies (IT)**

Article on the film

'Come la notte', the hidden scars of the Filipino community in Italy

FILM LOCATION PRODUCTIONS TRENTINO


## 'Come la notte', the hidden scars of the Filipino community in Italy

15-02-2025 Carmen Diotallevi Reading time: 5 minutes

**BERLIN** – "To the hardworking Filipino domestic workers, caregivers and cleaners around the world." This is the dedication of the film *Where the Night Stands Still*, an Italian-Filipino co-production in Competition at the **Berlinale** in the new section dedicated to first works, **Perspectives**. The feature film debut of the Filipino-born artist **Liryc Dela Cruz**, already selected in 2020 among the young emerging filmmakers of **Berlinale Talents**, who in his works investigates the post-colonial history of the Philippines and the existential and working conditions of a community scattered around the world, as in a sort of diaspora. What emerges is a strong need for self-determination and belonging – territorial, collective and individual – of a people subjected to centuries of oppression, migration and the struggle for survival. Where the profession of taking care of other people's homes and families has become a widespread and superficial ontological synonym for a false identity, which exerts its oppressive pressure on the individual and depersonalizes him, in favor of an archetype imposed by the foreign country in which he works and lives.

*The Brothers Karamazov* and *King Lear*, mixed with the popular culture of the Filipino community in Italy, are among the declared references of the film that tells the story of the meeting of three brothers, all domestic workers, who reunite after years of separation in the villa inherited from their older sister. The long-awaited reunion becomes an opportunity to confront the past, from which emerge unexpressed family memories and resentments. Their story gradually reveals a heavy load of absences, nostalgia, oppression suffered, failures, anger. Until what turns out to be a fragile bond of brotherhood crumbles, letting an internalized violence explode furiously that transforms the oppressed into ferocious oppressors.

*"This film is an exploration of the silent and corrosive legacy that colonialism has left on the Filipino psyche, its insidious power to fragment not only nations, but also families and individuals," said Liryc Dela Cruz. "I wanted to examine how centuries of oppression, displacement and struggle for survival have shaped the intimate dynamics of family, creating spaces where unresolved pain proliferates in silence. The scars of migration, of always serving in other people's homes, reveal a fractured sense of belonging, where care is tainted by resentment and love is inseparable from rancor."*



Like the night by Liryc Dela Cruz (ph: © Walang Hanggan)

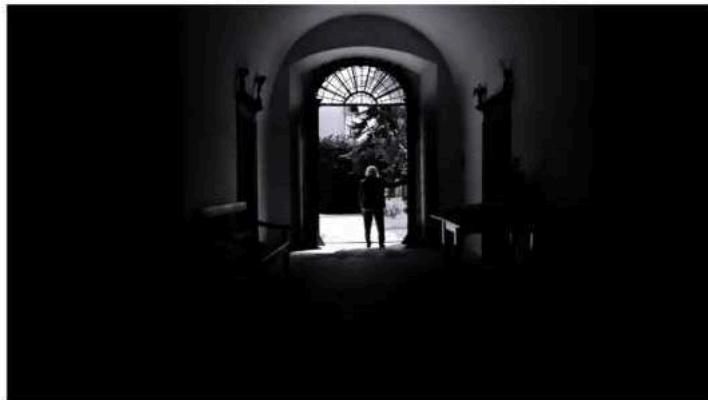
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## ARTICLES

### The filming locations and the Villa, a metaphor for imprisonment



*Like the night* by Liryc Dela Cruz (ph: © Walang Hanggan)

*Come la notte* is shot in black and white, a stylistic choice that accentuates the sense of nostalgia and melancholy of the protagonists. The filming took place in a villa in the province of Trento, owned by a friend of the director who has lived in Rome for many years, the **Palazzo Malfatti**, a historic building in the center of **Vigolo Vattaro** which, under the name of **Spazio '500**, has recently also become a place of hospitality, residence and higher education for the arts, entertainment and culture.

The images of the historic building, built on a pre-existing medieval structure but with a clear sixteenth-century layout, are full protagonists of the shots, making the Villa an imposing and silent presence, a non-place that connects the entire film whose suspended and static atmosphere reflects the state of tension of the characters. Long shots carefully linger on compositions of the often symmetrical spaces, lingering on details of cross-vaulted and barrel-vaulted rooms, whose European-inspired architecture is clearly in contrast with the Filipino roots of the protagonists, becoming a further symbolic expression of their condition of imprisonment in a foreign territory.

### *Like the Night*, synopsis and trailer

*After years of separation, three Filipino brothers, all domestic workers in Italy, reunite in the villa inherited from their older sister Lilia. As night falls, the long-awaited reunion brings back old memories and unspoken grudges. The air is thick with the weight of what has remained unspoken over time, as the brothers confront the delicate distance that has grown between them. In the silence of the villa, they wrestle with indescribable pain, as their shared history unravels in fragments, revealing silent but profound traces of absence, nostalgia, and broken bonds.*




ARTICLES

16 February 2025 **Eye for Film**  
Mixed review  
Where The Night Stands Still

## Where The Night Stands Still

★★★★☆

Reviewed by: **Marko Stojiljkovic**




*"Opting for the single-take scenes, usually in wider shots from a distance, signals artistic formal rigour." | Photo: © Walang Hanggan*



Have you ever wondered how would a bastard child between Lav Diaz' DIY filmmaking and the once-popular "mumblecore" cinema might look like if it were sprinkled with some artistic ambition? Ready or not, the answer is here in the form of Liryc Dela Cruz's debut feature *Where The Night Stands Still*, which premiered at the Perspectives section of [Berlinale](#).

Our protagonist Lilia (Tess Magallanes) is a Filipino woman living in Italy. She lives alone in a large and largely unfurnished villa and her daily life consists of routines. When she wakes up, she says a prayer in which she mentions Signora Patrizia, then proceeds to the surrounding garden for a breath of fresh air and some serenity, after which she does some more chores. One would assume that she lives as a maid in someone else's home, but later we learn she inherited the estate from the late Signora she worked for, who considered her a friend rather than the help.

That might be the reason why Lilia is being visited by her estranged siblings Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr, the only seasoned film actor among the cast) and Rosa (Jenny Lianto Caringal). Two younger siblings who stayed back in their homeland might be on a mission to persuade Lilia to sell the house and come back to the homeland with money to invest, while the older sister might have different ideas. The communication between the three seems more formal than intimate and affectionate and there are certain resentments from the past...




Dela Cruz opts for the DIY approach and full control over the film by occupying multiple crew roles: along with writing and directing the movie, the filmmaker also shot and edited it and did the production design. She has a considerable sense of style. The film is shot in the "shades of gray"-type of black and white cinematography that allows play between light and shadow, while opting for the single-take scenes, usually in wider shots from a distance, signals artistic formal rigour. The austerity is further accented by the lack of any music, but Antonio Gianantonio's great sound design fills the film with garden and neighbourhood noises. Also, Dela Cruz at least has and listens to editing assistants, so the runtime is a pleasant 75 minutes.

On the downside, there are significant discrepancies in the acting styles of the three cast members. Barcellano Jr positions his Manny as a man simmering with some sort of anger, Magallanes is the under-acting mode as a modest woman grateful to the kind stranger more than she ever was to her family, while Caringal gives a lived-in performance as the youngest sister who seemingly aims to please. That constellation, along with the very title of the film, gives away the final plot twist which simply does not come as a surprise for a trained viewer, no matter how subtle and precise Dela Cruz's execution of it is.

In the end, *Where Night Stands Still* is a stylish, interesting feature debut that signals the filmmaker's talent and sense of style. However, it somehow lacks in the substance department and would serve better as a short.

*Reviewed on: 16 Feb 2025*



Three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, meet in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited. Shared memories and buried grievances come to the surface and put their fragile relationship to the test.

**Director:** Liryc Dela Cruz  
**Writer:** Liryc Dela Cruz  
**Starring:** Tess Magallanes, Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr, Jenny Lianto Caringal  
**Year:** 2025  
**Runtime:** 75 minutes  
**Country:** Italy, Philippines  
**Festivals:**  
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ARTICLES


16 February 2025 **Le Polyester**  
Positive review  
[Berlinale | Review: Where the Night Stands Still](#)

Berlinale | Review: Where the Night Stands Still

Published on February 16, 2025



After years of separation, three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, meet in the villa that one of the sisters has inherited. As the night goes on, the long-awaited reunion stirs old memories, but also awakens buried tensions.



Where the Night Stands Still  
Philippines, 2025  
By Liryc Dela Cruz  
Duration: 1h15  
Exit : -  
Note : ★★★★★

ON THE SIDE OF HOME


It is in the peaceful quiet of an Italian palazzo cut off from the daily hustle and bustle that **Where the Night Stands Still** takes place. Here, hidden from view, daily life unfolds at a calm and tranquil tempo: Lilia, a white-haired Filipino lady, gets up taking her time, sweeps her empty home taking her time, and generally takes her time slowly. However, the black and white in which all this is filmed is not one of those black and whites of the icy refinery. The contrast is pushed hard, just enough to install a slight veil of strangeness while maintaining an apparent normality. What could possibly be wrong for the heroine when she is receiving a visit today from her brother and sister whom she has not seen for a long time?

This slightly decrepit but still imposing villa, with a private and large park, belonged until now to Lilia's boss who, we understand, was probably a housekeeper or a home nurse. Recently deceased, this rich woman with no family left her everything, including her fortune. Has Lilia hit the jackpot that every domestic worker dreams of? This is what her brother and sister believe, whose jealousy can be guessed in half-words behind their questions about the real relationship she could have with her boss. Veiled in sincere mourning, Lilia is not at all in the mood to count her millions. **Where the Night Stands Still** tells the story, over a day and a night, of the thwarted reunion of this sibling group where each has experienced a violent uprooting and a difficult integration into a Western world of work that grants them little dignity, to the point of sabotaging their sense of empathy and solidarity.

There is something too obvious about invoking the name of Laila Diaz in front of a Filipino film under the pretext that it is in black and white. However, the parallel becomes more and more logical as the protagonists discuss. When the characters are not taking advantage of the immense garden for a nap in the sun, they are in fact philosophically exchanging on their personal and collective traumas ( *"I forgot the suffering it was to be Filipino"* , *"I have the impression that the sky is not ours"* ). **Where the Night Stands Still** may be of a modest length, it is built on certain radical biases (no dialogue during the first fifteen minutes, a contrast of image so strong that it sometimes erases the features of the actors) but also has the mysterious elegance of a haunted mansion film.


There is indeed much talk of death in this story, of passing to the other side, to the point that one wonders if these characters are not ghostly allegories. Even in its abrupt and enigmatic denouement, which is enough to freeze the spectators lulled by the placid rhythm of the film, **Where the Night Stands Still** leaves a large part to interpretation despite a very simple plot. If the staging threatens to become a little anxiety-provoking at times, this story of poor Filipino workers who become the sole residents of a historic European building remains an incisive parable on decolonization.


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Where the Night Stands Still | Trailer | Berlinale 2025

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by Gregory Coutaut

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16 February 2025 **The Manila Times**

Mixed review

[The Philippines at Berlinale 2025: Showcasing  
Filipino cinema on the global stage](#)

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**The Philippines at Berlinale 2025**  
**Showcasing Filipino cinema on the global stage**  
*THE FUTURE IS CREATIVE*

By Liza Diño-Seguerra February 16, 2025

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**Goldie Poblador finds footing in the fragile...**

As the world's cinephiles and industry professionals converge in Berlin for the 75th Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale) and the European Film Market (EFM) — running from Feb. 13 to 23, Filipino filmmakers and industry delegates are making their mark with a powerful lineup of films, projects, and key industry participation.



With Giona Nazzaro, artistic director of the Locarno Film Festival

Adding to the Filipino presence at Berlinale, Maris Racal dazzled on the red carpet during the festival's Opening Night, representing Filipino talent on a global stage.

A stunning Italian-Filipino co-production, "Come la Notte (Where the Night Stands Still)" debuts in Berlinale's Perspectives section. Directed and written by Lyric dela Cruz, who also serves as the film's producer, the film is a deeply personal and visually striking meditation on identity, displacement, and memory. Co-produced by Leonardo Birindelli, Gutierrez Mangansakan II, Moira Lang, and Evelyn Vargas-Knaebel, this world premiere highlights the powerful collaboration between Italy and the Philippines.



ARTICLES

16 February 2025 **Micropsia Cine (IT)**  
Article on the film  
[Berlinale 2025: Review of “Where the Night Stands Still” \(“Come la notte”\), by Liryc Dela Cruz \(Perspectives\)](#)



**Berlinale 2025: Review of “Where the Night Stands Still” (“Come la notte”), by Liryc Dela Cruz (Perspectives)**

by **Diego Lerer** - cinema , reviews , festivals  
16 Feb, 2025 10:09 | No comments

Three Filipino siblings meet in the house that the eldest has inherited in Italy. During the days they spend together, conflicts arise linked to their history and their present. In the Perspectives competition.

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Shot in high-contrast black and white in a single location – a large house with a field – this Filipino film could be considered a chamber story as it deals with only three characters who meet in this place, located in the middle of the Italian countryside. First we see Lilia (Tess Magallanes), who lives there, since she inherited the house from the person she worked for. Her siblings Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal) and Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr.) come to visit her and meet her for a meal in the courtyard of the house. In the conversation, apparently about casual matters, some issues related to the relationship between all of them and the family history come to light.

## ARTICLES

Thus, as the minutes pass slowly – there are few events outside the series of conversations, most of which are individual walks around the estate – the conflicts intensify in a somewhat elusive way but which clearly create distance between the visitors and the owner. Immigration, separation, the relationship with the owners of the houses where they work – all three live in Italy and do more or less the same thing – and debts or personal grudges appear to upset everything. Even more than initially imaginable.



A small, discreet, unambitious and moderately effective Filipino film, although it fails to generate much enthusiasm, **COMME LA NOTTE** will surely not go down in history as one of the important films of that country, but it does honestly and quite starkly present the family, personal and psychological legacy of colonialism in the minds of its victims, who often embody and internalize these conflicts and transform them into their own.

### ARTICLES

16 February 2025 **My Movies**

Positive review

Like the night, Dela Cruz places himself as a privileged interpreter of an investigation that is hoped to be long and fruitful over the years



## DELA CRUZ POSITIONS HIMSELF AS THE PRIVILEGED INTERPRETER OF AN INVESTIGATION THAT IS HOPED TO BE LONG AND FRUITFUL OVER THE YEARS.

Review by Tommaso Tocci  
Saturday 15 February 2025




After a life spent in Italy working as a maid, Filipino Lilia finds herself left with the estate of her employer, who died without heirs. Alone in a huge villa, she is visited by her younger siblings, Manny and Rosa, with whom she shares a difficult family history and some disagreements about the circumstances of the present.

Slow cinema meets themes of diaspora, migration and identity in this small debut that talks about Italy and the Philippines, investigating the space shared between the two peoples. It is directed by Liryc Dela Cruz, a young artist making her debut in fiction feature films after several shorts and documentaries.

*Dela Cruz, a Filipino resident in Rome, is also part of the collective Il mio filippino, through which he has worked extensively on the perception and stereotypes to which his community is subjected in our country. And the classic image of the domestic worker becomes central in his film, which however empties it of meaning, imagining it as a "post" space within which complex identity and family dynamics flow again.*

We discover it mainly from the exchanges between the three brothers, linked by an indissoluble bond and yet also distant from each other due to their travels and different life experiences. *Come la notte* is in some ways a classic ghost film, which focuses in particular on how bodies inhabit spaces that are too large and never truly their own; not only the three characters on the screen, constantly searching for an impossible mediation, but also the absent one of Mrs. Patrizia, who disappeared during the pandemic and is constantly evoked in Lilia's prayers, who finds herself looking after her house with a mixture of gratitude and disorientation.

Making extensive use of fixed-shot sequences and dilated times, Dela Cruz honors the great auteur tradition of the cinema of his country of origin, also taking care of the screenplay, editing and photography of a powerful black and white, torn apart by plays of light. His is a strong stylistic imprint, and mostly makes up for a writing that sometimes gives the impression of functioning as a *proof of concept* of his thematic research rather than as a truly organic and multifaceted narrative.

Yet that thematic research is there and it is important: together with a particularly scathing ending it sheds light on a meritorious perspective on a cultural and social tradition of a certain relevance, which concerns the members of one of the largest foreign communities in our country: Dela Cruz places himself as a privileged interpreter of an investigation that hopefully will be long and fruitful over the years. 

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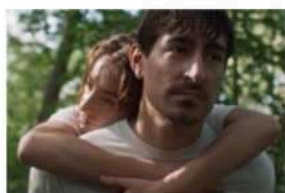


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16 February 2025 **Screen International**  
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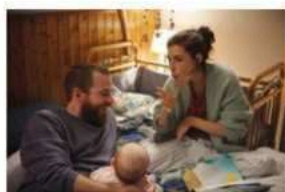
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16 February 2025 **Style (RU)**  
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Impressions

# Berlinale 2025: Where Dreams Lead



Still from the film "Dreams"  
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**BERLINALE 2025. FESTIVAL DIARIES** **AUTHOR** STAS TYRKIN **FEBRUARY 16, 2025**

After its London premiere, Bong Joon-ho's "Mickey 17" with a cloned Robert Pattinson was shown at the Berlin Film Festival

## ARTICLES

### "Like Night" by Lyric Dela Cruz

The feature debut of Italian-based Filipino director and contemporary artist Lyric Dela Cruz, *Come la notte/Where the Night Stands Still*, follows in a sleek monochrome way an elderly Filipino woman, Ata, who has faithfully served a certain Signora Patricia for 35 years, for which the said Signora, clearly very old, transferred her huge Italian estate to her before dying of Covid. Having become the owner of an inherited property with a history of 500 years, the Filipina, of course, does not feel like one at all, habitually sweeping and washing the floor, as in her time as a servant. Her brother and sister, who are working in Rome, come to visit and offer to sell her luxurious villa and live comfortably in her homeland (where Ata also aspires to, since she hasn't eaten boiled bananas for a long time), but the devoted maid promised her mistress not to sell the estate, and now she hangs around her park and doesn't know what to do with all this. If it weren't for the regular checkups and colonoscopy, she'd hang herself. However, now Ata has every chance of living, like many Italians, to be a hundred years old.

This plot is a fragment of the structure of today's old rich Europe, not only Italy. The aging population cannot do without help from the "newcomers". And they feel like modern slaves, even though Rome has not been the same for a long time. Exceptions, like Ata, only confirm the rule. "We are slaves both at home and here!" - bitterly notes the younger brother, whom Ata advises to work harder and better. On the other hand, modern patricians live very long, but someday they die too, and something from their possessions in one way or another passes into the hands of new citizens of aging countries. And this creates a split in the migrant community. In short, Ata should not have invited poor relatives into "his" home.

In his free time from art, the talented Lyric co-founded the collective *Il Mio Filippino*, which united Filipino cleaners, domestic and social workers. His short, capacious film study of the life of compatriots in a foreign land captivates with its sober authenticity and artistic truth.



Still from the film "Like Night"

© PELIRICULA

ARTICLES

16 February 2025 **Taxidriv**


Article on the film

'Like the Night' or the Banality of Colonial Evil

BERLINALE


# 'Like the Night' or the Banality of Colonial Evil





An open garden on migrant Italy in the Perspectives section of the Berlinale 2025.



Published 3 weeks ago The February 16, 2025

Written by Joy Zurlo






An Italian-Philippines co-production having its world premiere in the **Perspectives** section of the 75th **Berlinale**.

Set in the Roman province but performed entirely in Filipino, **Come la notte** is a tale as much our own as it is distant, with a strong visual impact and composed beauty.


A fictional feature film by director **Liryc Dela Cruz**, the film is produced by **Pelircula** in collaboration with **Il Mio Filipino Collective**, **Ozono Studio** and **Reckless Natarjan Pictures**.



For those interested in watching

*After years apart, three Filipino brothers meet in the mansion one of their sisters inherited. As the night deepens, the long-awaited reunion awakens old memories but also unspoken resentments. The air is heavy with the weight of what has been left unfinished over time, as the brothers try to bridge the distance that has grown between them.*


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### ARTICLES

*As the Night* Grows in Dela Cruz's previous work, "My Filipino: For Those Who Care To See." The project began with the bodies of Filipino workers, constructing an iconography of economic, physical, and spiritual alienation and colonization.

From the beginning of telling closely and in a declared way lives that coexist in our geographical reality but that continue to be isolated and distant, **Dela Cruz** explores a parenthesis in the story of three brothers. One of them, the eldest, tied to the house that she cleans and honors of Mrs. Patrizia, a woman who served for 35 years and who left her property to her.

When her brothers come to visit her in this silent villa, **Dela Cruz** brings to the surface the unsaid suffering of migration: a scar burned by her constant communion with serving the other, "la Signora Patrizia" – the only two words spoken in Italian in the film that reverberate from time to time like thunder in a triangulation of resentments and affections already precarious. The three, isolated in a golden cage, metaphorical and material, face the constraint of remaining slaves forever.

A tale of the new colonialism: the story of the obligations of that tide of unrecognized Italians, now locked up in new prisons of precariousness and the impossibility of political and social rights.

And it is here that the brothers' underlying anger simmers, unexpected and predictable, which merges into a flash of violence in the final moments.



#### Black and White Paintings for a New Kind of Slavery

The real pearl inherent in *Come la notte* remains the technical result of the image, the style and the material point of view that is exercised.

**De la Cruz** is deeply attentive to the visual and auditory rendering of the work, creating a refined and solid structure of images and sound, in a look halfway between two cinematographic traditions: Italian neorealism and Philippine lyrical cinema.

The film is a succession of photographic paintings with a black and white rich in contrasts, almost as if to abandon the gray scale. Black and white photos that breathe and that remain only partially visible among the clear black footprints.

Completely devoid of music, the audio of *Come la notte* abandons the ear to the diegetic sounds of the story that are amplified in this house of shadows. A moving photo album of horizontal and vertical paintings, silent but also full of the sound of living.

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## ARTICLES

17 February 2025 **Journey to Cinema**

Positive review

[Where the Night Stands Still: Between Light, Absence and Loss](#)

Massimo Iannetti · February 17, 2025

Festivals · Berlinale · Perspectives

### Where the Night Stands Still: Between Light, Absence and Loss



Liryc Dela Cruz's *Where The Night Stands Still* (2025) is a haunting meditation on displacement, inheritance and the unspoken tensions that fracture familial bonds.

The film follows Lilia, a Filipino domestic worker in Italy who inherits the villa of her late employer, Madam Patrizia. Her siblings, also domestic workers, visit her and the three reunite after years apart. Their reconnection is anything but celebratory. As the day unfolds, the air thickens with a suffocating silence, broken only by small talk steeped in passive aggression and old wounds that refuse to heal. **The house, with its grand yet empty spaces, becomes a silent witness to their estrangement.**

Lilia, despite legally owning the home, remains a guest in her own life, bound to a role of servitude that has shaped her existence. Her meticulous cleaning and unwillingness to claim the space as her own reflects a deeper truth — inheritance is not ownership and home is not just a place but a feeling denied to her.

Dela Cruz uses a static camera, reinforcing the sense of entrapment and impossibility of escape. The observational style blurs the line between fiction and documentary, making the characters feel achingly real, and capturing the weight of a lifetime spent in dependence: on others, on luck, on history.

## ARTICLES

Shot in striking black and white, with deep contrasts that evoke both memory and isolation, the film moves with a measured, almost ritualistic rhythm. It lingers in moments of stillness, inviting us to observe rather than intrude. Shadows stretch across empty hallways, echoing the characters' internal voids, while slivers of light cut through darkness like unspoken words.

The soundscape plays a crucial role — nature hums in the background, dogs bark, birds chirp, but human voices remain restrained, as if words are incapable of bridging the chasm between them. **The score, brewing just beyond the frame, adds to the film's oppressive atmosphere.**

While the film excels in visual storytelling, it occasionally falls into the trap of over-explaining what the images have already conveyed, with lines sometimes feeling redundant when juxtaposed with the stark imagery that so effortlessly communicates the protagonists' struggle. **Conversely, the film is at its most evocative when it is silence carrying the deepest weight of an unspoken tragedy.**

*Where The Night Stands Still* is a quiet storm, a deeply felt exploration of migration's emotional toll. It is a film about absence — of home, of belonging, of closure — and how, even in ownership, some people remain forever displaced.



**MASSIMO IANNETTI**

+ posts

Massimo Iannetti is a film programmer and writer based in London.


ARTICLES


18 February 2025 **The Hollywood Reporter Italy**  
Mentioned in article  
[Berlin 75, presented Come la notte, by the Italian-Filipino director Liryc Deal Cruz, in the Perspectives section](#)

HOME > MOVIE > REVIEW







# Berlin 75, presented Come la notte, by the Italian-Filipino director Liryc Deal Cruz, in the Perspectives section

It is the story, in Rome, of two sisters and a brother, heirs of a rich lady, who find themselves in a spiral of silent colonialist violence.

BY SIMONE RICCARDI  FEBRUARY 18, 2025 09:12



Berlin 75, "Like the Night". @THR, 2025



This year at the Berlinale the presence of Italian films is scant, in the case of the main competition it is completely absent. But something is there, and the first of the three Italian titles present arrives in the new section *Perspectives*. It is *Come la Notte*, by the Italian-Filipino director *Liryc Dela Cruz*, who brings to Berlin a film about identity, colonialism and a past from which it is impossible to escape.

By telling the story of two sisters and a brother of Filipino origin who find themselves in Rome in the villa inherited by their older sister following the death of the rich lady for whom she was housekeeper, the director stages a human condition that characterizes many immigrants, Filipinos and otherwise, forced to leave their families and their lands for purely economic reasons and who then, due to force majeure, find themselves entering a spiral of silent colonialist violence that leads them to a cultural distortion from which it seems impossible to escape.

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ARTICLES

There is, in fact, an intrinsic violence in the long conversations that the three characters have. Conversations that, as the film progresses, reveal friction and resentment that has been brewing for decades. A resentment that has a common and unmistakable root in colonialism.

A cultural colonialism that has pushed the word "Filipino" to no longer be a cultural and national identity, but rather a profession seen as of little value, that of domestic assistant, almost a derogatory term.

This leads to the eradication of identity, to the annihilation of dignity.

It is a diabolical mechanism, which leads the main character to undergo a brainwashing that makes any attempt at resistance desperate and fruitless. A spider web that traps its prey and puts them at its service, not unlike religion and capitalism.



Indeed, Dela Cruz suggests that colonialism, religion and capitalism work in unison, supporting each other within a system in which the victims become executioners and in which the only way out seems to be fratricidal violence.

Dela Cruz's film is set in a large and desolate seventeenth-century house, with endless lawns, enormous windows and rooms as spacious as they are claustrophobic.

The director works very well on the spaces and on an apparently calm atmosphere that but which harbours a sinister anger underneath that will explode in one of the most shocking moments of the film.



Why Hans Zimmer Refused to Compose Music for Marvel Cinematic Universe Films: "I've Done Three Times"

BY LEXI CARSON



Black Bag: Cate Blanchett and Michael Fassbender back in a fizzy spy thriller from Steven Soderbergh

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BY MATTEO GHIDONI



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BY BORYS KIT

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"Imma Tataranni walks the line between laughter and drama, because that's life": Vanessa Scalera at Attorstudio Milazzo Film Festival



### ARTICLES

18 February 2025 **Universal Cinema**

Positive review

[Berlinale 2025 | Where the Night Stands Still](#)

Featured Festivals Film Reviews

## Berlinale 2025 | Where the Night Stands Still

By **Bita Habibi** February 18, 2025

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In the ethereal dark, *Where the Night Stands Still* emerges as a captivating cinematic experience crafted by the visionary Liryc Dela Cruz. This debut feature delves into the profound depths of human emotions and the intricacies of our deeply held beliefs. While the film nestles in its monochrome context, the characters embark on a contemplative journey, delving into the intricacies of their deepest thoughts and desires. Dela Cruz navigates the tangled web of human relationships, unveiling the raw and vulnerable nature of sibling bonds reunited after a long separation. With a contemplative gaze on the human journey, *Where the Night Stands Still* invites us to ponder how echoes of past experiences reverberate through our future decisions.

Ate opens the film with her prayer while kneeling in front of the window "In the name of the father, of the son, of the holy spirit, Amen!" In the sombre aftermath of her demise, his thoughts and prayers drift towards Madame Patrizia, who in her final act bestowed her home upon Ate, the loyal maid whose faithful service spanned more than three decades, only to be untimely taken by the grip of Covid-19. Through these words, we come to understand that an unyielding force resides within Ate, akin to the night that eternally eludes the embrace of dawn's first light.

### ARTICLES

Ate is waiting to welcome her sister and brother, Rosa and Kuya. These Filipino siblings have finally reunited after a long separation. Though they are miles away from their ancestral home, it feels as if that distant place in the Philippines continues to dwell within them, carrying its pain, even with Ate, who now inhabits this grand house. Their long-awaited reunion awakens old memories and unvoiced grievances. The distance that has developed between them becomes increasingly apparent, uncovering the subtle yet deep scars of absence, longing, and broken connections. Ate's brother tries to convince her to sell the house and start a new life different from what has been experienced so far, but Ate is living as Madam Patrizia's servant even after her death. Such an ironic analogy is perceivable between the film's name and Ate's mindset. It seems the night of destiny never draws back on behalf of the light.

The depth of agony weighed heavily in Kuya's words as he spoke of their homeland. "In the Philippines and here in Italy, we are slaves!" His voice cracked with emotion, the pain of their separation and the struggles they faced etched into every syllable. Despite the physical distance that separated them, the bonds of their shared heritage and the memories of their homeland bound them together in a web of sorrow and longing. But Ate is nothing but a piece of holy verse that never changes, and for someone like her brother suffering from the hardships of life, believing and longing for it is a lunatic job.

Dela Cruz is an artist and filmmaker hailing from the Southern Philippines and Rome, Italy. In 2023, his exhibition "IL Mio Filipino: For Those Who Care to See" in Rome centred on his extensive research into themes of "exhaustion, slavery, care, hospitality, and the colonial history of the Philippines." Tess Magallanes, Jenny Llanto Caringal, and Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr. are the protagonists of *Where the Night Stands Still*. Pelircula, Ozono, and IL Mio Filipino Collective were the producers, with Reckless Natarajan Pictures serving as co-producer. Alpha Violet is responsible for international distribution.

The cinematography in *Where the Night Stands Still* is masterfully rendered in monochrome, heightening the film's emotional resonance and contemplative narrative. Nestled within the sprawling villa inherited by Ate, the black-and-white palette vividly captures the interplay of light and shadow, reflecting the intricate dynamics of the siblings' relationships. As three Filipino siblings—all domestic workers in Italy—reunite after years apart, the absence of colour evokes a poignant sense of nostalgia and longing, underscoring the weight of their intertwined past.

The environment is stripped of vibrant hues, reducing it to its essence and focusing the audience's gaze solely on the siblings' expressions and exchanges. Moments where light spills through the window onto their faces, capturing Rosa and Ate talking in the kitchen as they reminisce about their childhood, or slumbering in the darkened rooms, are beautifully illustrated in these black-and-white frames. Their interactions may carry a certain monotony in some scenes, yet the cinematography enriches these quiet moments, transforming them into poignant reflections of their shared journey and emotional landscapes.

*Where the Night Stands Still*, the debut feature film of Liryc Dela Cruz, has its world premiere in the [Berlin Film Festival's](#) New Perspectives section, a competition program for first fiction features.



### ARTICLES

19 February 2025 **Cinephilia (GR)**

Mixed review

[Like the night](#)

You are here: [Home page](#) » [Movies](#) » [Cosmos](#) » [Like the night](#)

## Like the night

(Where the Night Stands Still)

by Liryc Dela Cruz

(review: Kalliopi Putouroglou)



Slow static shot, black and white. A face emerges into the light, through the darkness that floods the interior of a house. The face seems to be meditating with its eyes closed. It is Lilia, originally from the Philippines, who faithfully served her Italian mistress for over 30 years and after her death enjoys the eerie tranquility of the old mansion, of which she was the sole heir. The camera slowly follows her inside and outside the house, ritually performing simple daily tasks. And praying for the soul of her mistress, grateful for what she offered her. The class will be shaken when one morning the woman receives visitors. They are her younger siblings, Rosa and Manny who live in Rome, call her Ate (big sister) and have not seen her for a long time. The reserved reception and the distance between them will gradually develop into a relaxed hospitality that will allow the distant siblings to exchange thoughts, anxieties, complaints and even repressed feelings over time. However, as the camera gets closer to the faces and the excellent - mostly laconic - dialogues will bring to the surface their poisoned relationships and a centuries-old bitterness, the viewer's anxiety and suspicions will grow. Because the pre-economics is visible here and the hero's ignorance is genuine, like that in classical tragedies. The reversal of Ate's fortune has almost something of a fatality and is carried out in the deep darkness in the most violent way.

There is something that haunts the viewer from the beginning in this simple in narrative but impressive aesthetic and dark interiority black and white film by Liryc Dela Cruz. A multifaceted Filipino artist, who lives and works in Rome and has a long history of exploring themes related to indigenous Pacific history, colonial practices and the post-colonial Philippines, focusing mainly on the origins and biographies of care workers.

A mysterious sense of entrapment in a no-place hovers from the beginning in this 500-year-old house. Is it the way the former domestic worker and current hostess moves around it, her invading relatives or perhaps the reminder of a long period of poverty and hardship that contribute to the creation of this threatening atmosphere? Dela Cruz builds this universe mainly using a mysterious darkness that is unexpectedly broken by aggressive bursts of light. And with the stories of the people who inhabit or visit it, which are gradually revealed with extraordinary economy and disarming realism. Through a series of fragmentary dialogues between the siblings, in pairs or all three together, emerge the eroded but still existing family bonds, the rivalries, the unhealed wounds, the wounds of displacement and survival in a foreign land.

Liryc Dela Cruz says: "At its core, this film reflects a deeper, darker truth: when the oppressed internalize the violence of their oppressors, the result can be even more devastating. The most terrible legacy of colonialism is the way it turns pain into power, making those who have suffered unsuspecting carriers of evil. The dissolution of the family bond here is not simply the result of personal failures, but a symptom of a much larger, more pervasive evil that turns victimization into a weapon. The most tragic result of this legacy is when the oppressed become unknowing carriers of the very oppression they once fought. This film serves as a cautionary tale, a reminder that the wounds inflicted by history do not disappear. They can mutate, turn inward, poison even our closest relationships. If we do not confront this cycle, the pain of the past will continue to claim new victims, sometimes even at our own hands."

Berlinale 2025/ Perspectives

### ARTICLES

16 February 2025 **Film Fest Report**

Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz


[Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still |](#)

[Interview with Liryc Dela Cruz](#)

Berlinale 2025

Interview


## Berlinale 2025: Where the Night Stands Still | Interview with Liryc Dela Cruz





Prachi Bari


3 weeks ago


6 minutes read











Liryc Dela Cruz, Tess Magallanes, Jenny Liñito Carling, Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr. in Berlin, Germany | Photo by Prachi Bari

### Finding roots and family in a distant community: we interviewed director Liryc Dela Cruz at the 75th Berlinale.

32-year-old Liryc Dela Cruz, originally from the Philippines, now lives in Rome, Italy, and has a distinct way of telling a story. It is also part of his life that he has led so far, thus making his film [Come la Notte](#) (*Where the Night Stands Still*) a memorable film. This film, through the story of three siblings, brings to the fore their grievances, happiness, and long-lost memories all in one night.

Dela Cruz feels that it is very important for a young person, especially coming from the far-flung regions of the Philippines, where there's not so much access to development, to funding, to explore opportunities and do more for ourselves. "In the Philippines, I was working as a filmmaker, also as an artist, and then, of course, when you're young, you want to decide where to go and what to do. I wanted to explore cinema and develop filmmaking along with other life experiences, hence I thought of going out of my country. I was 26 then.

While in the Philippines, I used to work with director [Lav Diaz](#), who inspired me a lot. It was he who told me not to be afraid and to take risks. So, I think it's very important," said Dela Cruz.

To trace back a bit of history of the Filipinos in Italy, one must understand that they were colonized by Spain for more than 300 years. But why are there so many Filipinos in Italy? It is a frequently asked question, and Dela Cruz explained that the biggest Filipino diaspora in Europe is in Italy.

"The Catholic Church played a role in connecting Filipino workers with opportunities in Europe, particularly in Italy. Italian families, especially those with strong Catholic ties, often hired Filipino women as domestic workers. This led to a pattern of chain migration, allowing workers to later bring their families. Initially, it was difficult due to ongoing issues of racism in Italy. However, since Italians also deeply value family, once a worker was accepted, they were often treated as part of the household. The Church acted as a bridge, facilitating a kind of matchmaking between Catholic Filipino women seeking work and wealthy Italian families in need of domestic and care workers," he further added.

"Once accepted, Filipino workers were made to feel like part of the family. Yet, this inclusion came with both an obligation and a burden, it was as if their roles and identities had already been predefined, leaving little room for deviation," Dela Cruz noted.

The director also highlighted the stereotypes that persist despite integration. "But due to racist and stereotypical ways of identifying people, they create this identity that limits the possibility for a person of what they can do. Because they see you as how you look. If you still don't have the whiteness associated with being from their country, you are still a bit of an outsider. I remember one of the first experiences that I had, and I was the only person of colour there. And a guy gave me the plate. Because he thought that I was one of the workers."

To tell his story of the reuniting of the three siblings, Dela Cruz chose the medium of black-and-white film. "It was a choice to have this more connection to the character, which, for me, blurs the line between fiction and non-fiction. Also because the story gives a lot of familiarity about our personal lives, about the lives of the characters, for example. That's why this conscious thing to make it black and white is to create a direct connection between the audience and the images, allowing them to simply witness the story unfold."



ARTICLES



Tess Megalanes in Come la notte (Where the Night Stands Still) by Liryc Dela Cruz | © Wang Henggen

He was inspired to look at this story through the Filipino collective of workers, where he also does cleaning work. **Mio Filippino Collective** is a collective of Filipino domestic and care workers, artists, community organizers, and members of the diaspora based in Italy. Their mission is to collaborate, co-create, and co-imagine with people and groups who are dedicated to fostering communities of resistance, care, and hospitality; environments where transformation, new imaginations, and self-determination flourish. Their work and research are deeply anchored in the values of care, hospitality, anti-racist, anti-colonial resistance, and decolonial practices.

Through their flagship project, *Il Mio Filippino*, they highlight the effects of racial capitalism, colonial borders, and the militarized control of bodies, minds, and communities.

"It is growing because even second and third-generation Filipino Italians are approaching us. It is something that is what we heard from the community, what we experienced as a person, and some familiar family experiences that we have. So, here you see that she inherits a house. Is it a big thing when you inherit something like this from an Italian? How does it change the whole perspective for you? I think it talks about the change of... Because you cannot talk about the community of migrants if you don't talk about class. Because the idea of class is very important. You cannot just say that we are all Filipinos, and we are all racialized. If you change your class still in a territory, how people will treat you will also change. So this idea of luck, of inheriting a villa, is something that is momentous for a person in a territory that just identifies him as a nobody, as an invisible worker. Now that you have the villa, now that you have all the possibilities to be different, to be somebody else."

He adds that this villa was used as a device to talk about the class struggle, but also to question the sense of belonging. It is still a bubble. It is like a microcosm of the territory, showing the most intimate part of the territory, which is the family.

The house played a vital part in the story. "I fell in love with the house when I arrived there. I studied the light in this very special house, using its beauty to evoke images of alienation and loneliness." He stressed that because now that you have this house, the way for you to emancipate is always questionable. "Can I go back to the Philippines to take a rest? No, because I still have to take care of the villa. So, it's still this way of giving her a responsibility even though the person is not there anymore. But you still see that there is her character there talking to the ghost. But you can see also how she was so tied up to the person who, like a god-like person, lifted her character because she was always saying that she's thankful to the señor, to the madam. But then it is also something that we can talk about how slavery is also potent in that kind of thing because her character is something that cannot really escape."

"One is, you can make out the greed, the avarice, not getting anything enough, not being good for anything. So that was very interesting for me. I think it's very important to have a reunion, to see this reunion as something that can make us understand how migration has stolen time from these people, preventing them from reconnecting."

"You question the concept of a family, and you question also how really the territory is shaping them. These distances, they always reconnect about their past. I am a product also of a lot of mistakes, of a lot of troubles when I was young. And I try to make it by myself to do something in the present. Because if you will look at the future, the future might not happen tomorrow."

"As with any relationship, especially one with a dysfunctional history, we must sometimes question how the present shapes our chances and opportunities. The present, I think, what we forget in the recent memory as human beings, that's why we are very detached in the idea of what is happening today right now to us is also we are always looking at the future. We forget how to be in the present, even though it offers us the chance to correct past mistakes."



Film Fest Report is an accredited media at the 75th Berlin International Film Festival.

ARTICLES

21 February 2025 Tagesspiegel (DE) (print and online)

Article on the film

[New Young Talent Competition at the Berlinale:](#)

[This was the first issue of “Perspectives”](#)

## New Young Talent Competition at the Berlinale This was the first issue of “Perspectives”

Disturbed in Calcutta, crazy in Vienna, in love in Taipei. The  
“Perspectives” show how young filmmakers view the world.

By Gunda Bartels

February 21, 2025, 11:33 am



A good idea doesn't get any worse just because someone else had it before. It speaks to the pragmatism and sense of tradition of festival director Tricia Tuttle that her first innovation is a section for young filmmakers.

→ **Berlinale** All articles about the film festival

This already existed from 2002 to 2023 with the “Perspektive Deutsches Kino” founded by Dieter Kosslick and Alfred Holighaus. A section popular with the audience that served as a showcase and springboard for young national filmmakers, but most recently under Carlo Chatrian has become smaller every year.

Anzeige



## ARTICLES

Another outlier like “He Mán”, a unique work, is “BLKNWS: Terms & Conditions” from the USA. In his virtuoso art film, the video artist Kahlil Joseph unfolds a stream of images from archive material and staged scenes as a collective flow of memories of black people.



Strictly framed and mostly filmed from a distance. The drama of three Filipino domestic workers in Italy in “Come la notte”. © © Welang Haggan

This and the two black-and-white films “Minden Rendben”, a guilt drama from Hungary, and “Come la notte” from Italy about Filipino domestic workers, would then outline the stylistic range of the section.

The majority of debutants are within the conventional framework in terms of narrative style and choice of subject matter. The times are perhaps too serious for excessive playfulness and unbridled willingness to experiment. Or financing is too difficult. There are no clear swings in quality, either up or down.



8 **Berlinale**

tagesspiegel.de Sonntag, 23. Februar 2025

Von Gunda Bartels

**E**ine gute Idee wird nicht schlechter, nur weil sie schon mal jemand anderes hatte. Es spricht für den Pragmatismus und das Traditionsbewusstsein von Festivalchefin Tricia Tuttle, dass sie als erste Neuerung eine Sektion für den filmischen Nachwuchs installiert. Die hat es von 2002 bis 2023 bereits mit der „Perspektive Deutsches Kino“ gegeben. Eine populäre Sektion, die aber unter Carlo Chiarin jedes Jahr kleiner ausfiel.

Viele Jungregisseure, die erst an den Workshops der Berlinale Talenta teilnahmen, gaben später hier ihren filmischen Einstand. 2024 war es aufgrund von Sparmaßnahmen dann ganz vorbei mit der direkten Andockmöglichkeit deutscher Filmhochschulen ans Festival, das in der „Perspektive“ viele Abschlussfilme zeigte.

Deutsche Debüts laufen nun in allen Sektionen, wobei es kaum noch Abschlussfilme hiesiger Hochschulen aufs Festival schaffen. „Schwesterherz“ von DFFB-Absolventin Sarah Miro Fischer (Panorama) ist diesmal der einzige. Eine Chance auf den mit 50.000 Euro dotierten Debütpreis hat er nicht. Früher stammten die Anwärter für den besten Erstlingsfilm aus allen Sektionen, jetzt bleibt der Preis dem international aufgezogenen Wettbewerb vorbehalten.

Aber es gibt damit nun wieder ein eigenes Schaufenster für den Nachwuchs. „Perspectives“ präsentierte 14 Filme aus 19 Ländern. Der Blick weitet sich. Und es sind selten Idyllen, die sich da zeigen.

#### Kriegstrauma in Kalkutta

So wie in „The Devil Smokes (and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box)“ des Mexikaners Ernesto Martínez Bucio, der wie ein Coming-of-Age-Film beginnt und allmählich zu einem klaustrophobischen Familiendrama wird. Fünf Geschwister finden sich in der Obhut der Großmutter wieder, nachdem die Mutter die Familie plötzlich verlässt und der Vater sich auf die Suche nach ihr begibt. Mari-sol, die Älteste, ist überfordert von der Verantwortung für ihre beiden jüngeren Schwestern und Brüder; wenn es ihr zu viel wird, steckt sie den Kopf in einen Eimer voller Wasser. Die Großmutter verliert langsam den Bezug zur Realität.

Was als kindlicher Anarchismus beginnt, nimmt immer deutlichere Anzeichen einer Verwahrlosung an; irgendwann steht sogar das Jugendamt vor der Tür. Martínez Bucio spielt in seinem Debüt mit Horrormotiven, sein visuelles Gespür für Atmosphäre ist beeindruckend – und die Auszeichnung mit dem Preis der Sektion gerechtfertigt.

„In einer Welt der unbegrenzten Möglichkeiten habe ich mich entschieden, krank zu sein“, sagt Pia (Luisa-Céline Gaffron) im furiosen Debüt „How to Be Normal and the Oddness of the Other World“ des Österreicher Florian Pochlatko. Pia, 26, kehrt aus der Psychiatrie ins Elternhaus am Rand von Wien zurück. Ihr Vater hat ihr einen Büro-job besorgt, die Mutter streicht Pausenbrot, alle mühen sich um Normalität. Doch gibt es die überhaupt? Der Weg zurück ins Leben ist als wilder Bilderrausch inszeniert, der direkt aus Pias bipolarem Gehirn zu stammen scheint. Glauben sie nicht alles, was sie denken“, rät der Psychiater.

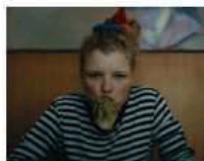


In „The Devil Smokes (and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box)“ drifft eine Familie ins Chaos.

## Was bitte ist Normalität?

Verrückt in Wien, verliebt in Taipeh, verloren in der Lausitz:  
Bilanz des neuen Debüt-Wettbewerbs „Perspectives“

Einen Psychiater zu konsultieren, davon können sie anderswo nur träumen. Im Familiendrama „Baksho Bondi“ des indischen Regisseurs Tanushree Das und Saumyananda Sahi zerstört die post-



Verrückte Welt. Luisa-Céline Gaffron ist Pia in „How to Be Normal and the Oddness of the Other World“.

traumatische Belastungsstörung eines Ex-Soldaten eine Familie. Seit Sundar die Offiziersuniform ausgezogen hat und nur noch Frösche fängt, ist er das Gespött der Nachbarn im Vorort von Kalkutta. Seine Frau hält den Laden mühsam mit mehreren Jobs am Laufen. Als Sundar auch noch unter Mordverdacht gerät, flüchtet sich Sohn Debu zur Familie der Mutter, die Sundar nie akzeptiert hat.

„Baksho Bondi“ ist ein Sozialdrama, das einen bitteren Blick auf die Defizite und Hierarchien der indischen Gesellschaft wirft. Arm sein

und psychisch krank, ein Mann sein, aber verschreckt wie ein Kind: dafür ist weder Platz noch Hilfe vorgesehen.

Ein ebenso naturalistisches Sozialdrama kommt aus Ägypten. „Al musta'mara“ von Mohamed Rashad. Die ausgeblenden Bilder eines Industriegebiets von Alexandria, in dem der 23-jährige Hossam und sein zwölfjähriger Bruder Maro morgens zum Bus stapfen, der die Arbeiter in eine archaische Metallfabrik fährt, lässt nichts Gutes für deren Umwelt ahnen. Die beiden nehmen den Platz ihres Vaters ein, der in der Fabrik tödlich verunglückt ist – ein gnädiger Akt der Firmenbesitzer.

#### Zwei Ausreißer, zwei Unikate

Auch „He Man“, Chu Chun-Tengs poetische Meditation über Wasser, Liebe, Erinnerung, Verfall und Wachstum thematisiert das ärmliche Leben in der Peripherie, diesmal der Großstadt Taipeh. Aber ohne dessen soziale Härte zu zeigen. Stattdessen bringt die vorsichtige Annäherung eines jungen Mannes an eine geheimnisvolle Frau, die er wie eine Nixe aus dem Wasser zieht, mit ihren magisch-realistischen Bildern eine einzigartige Farbe in den Wettbewerb.

Noch so ein Ausreißer; ein Unikat, ist „BLKNWS: Terms & Conditions“ aus den USA. Der Videokünst-

#### Perspectives

Gezeigt wurden 14 Filme aus 19 Ländern. Der Preis (50.000 Euro) wird von der Gesellschaft zur Wahrnehmung von Film- und Fernsehrechten (GWFF) gestiftet. Die Jury: die Filmemacherin Meryam Joubert, die Schauspielerin Aïssa Maïga und die Produzentin Maria Zamora. Ausgezeichnet wurde „The Devil Smokes (and Saves the Burnt Matches in the Same Box)“ von Ernesto Martínez Bucio.

ler Kahlil Joseph entfaltet virtuos einen Bilderstrom aus Archivmaterial und inszenierten Szenen als kollektiven Erinnerungsfluss schwarzer Menschen. Zur stilistischen Bandbreite des neuen Wettbewerbs gehören noch die Schwarzweiß-Filme „Minden Rendben“, ein Schuld-Drama aus Ungarn, und „Come la notte“ aus Italien über philippinische Hausangestellte, aber das Gros der Debütanten erzählt konventionell. Die Zeiten sind womöglich zu ernst für überbordenden Spieltrieb. Oder die Finanzierung ist zu schwer. Klare Qualitätsauschläge nach oben oder unten gab es nicht.

Immer Verlass ist beim Nachwuchs auf Coming-of-Age-Stories. Eindruckliches Beispiel: Mit der Faust in die Welt schlagen“, das Debüt der Deutschen Constanze Klaus. Aus Sicht zweier Brüder schildert es atmosphärisch dicht den Abstieg einer Familie in der Oberlausitz Anfang der 2000er.

In einer ganz anderen, weil sexuell aufgeladenen Tonalität und Metaphorik, erzählt „Kaj ti je deklica“ der Slowenin Urška Djukić von katholischen Chormädchen, die ein Wochenende auf dem Land verbringen. Der Sommer flirrt, Blicke gehen hin und her. Baurbeiter baden nackt im Fluss. Lucija taumelt durch ein Emotionsfeuerwerk. Die Pubertät ist schon Drama genug.

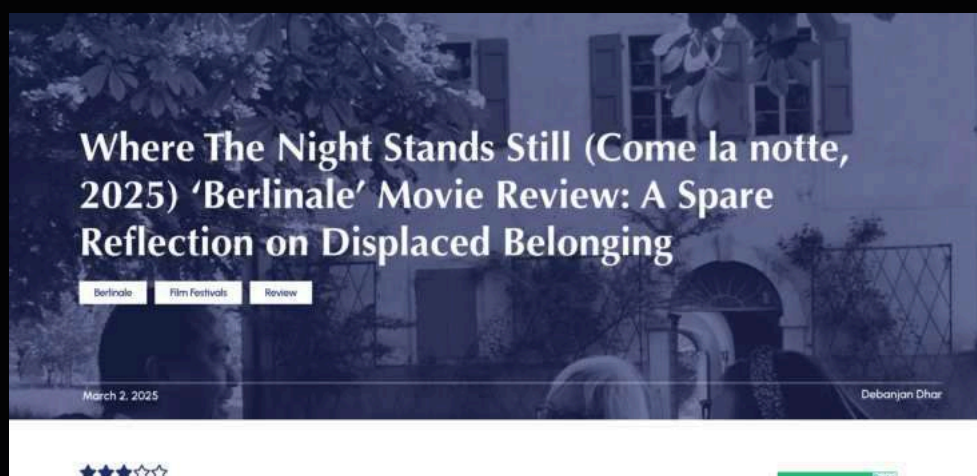
© Samir Zuhair, Norbert P. Foto: Gabe B. P. H.

### ARTICLES

23 February 2025 **High on Films**

Positive review

[Where The Night Stands Still \(Come la notte, 2025\) 'Berlinale' Movie Review: A Spare Reflection on Displaced Belonging](#)



Liryc Dela Cruz's *Where The Night Stands Still* (*Come la notte*, [2025](#)) opens with an extended shot of a woman rigorously cleaning a house. It's a canny choice, reinforcing the settled image of the protagonist, Lila (Tess Magallanes) in the role of a house-help. Her situation has dramatically changed, however, when we enter the film. The Filipino immigrant has inherited the vast house of her Italian boss, Patricia. So, she's come into unexpected wealth and uber comfortable lifestyle. Everything is transferred to Lila. But has Lila learned to fully lean into it, embrace it as her own that she can view legally hers alone?

Sadness, a lack of possession drapes itself around the lives of immigrants. The plot shifts into motion when Lila's siblings, Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr) and Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal), drop by and visit her. There's a decay that immigrants try to stave off. Is this the illusion of a better life? What is it if not a temporary fig leaf of just a dream? Does assimilation come about with harmony and balance and not violent erosion? How does one move on and reconstruct their identity in a land away from their roots? The film stares into the chasm created by the trajectory. What are the losses that accrue in the process, the shape of stubborn hope?

The film threads together conversations borne of despair, regrets, and disillusion. Siblings reassuringly ask her if she's doing well. How is she managing all by herself at the vast estate? Isn't it terribly unsafe, and isolating? She must be pining for the comfort and warmth of her family and loved ones back in the Philippines. There's so much she could have if she stayed back or moved in.



## ARTICLES

Being abroad, removed from any familiar face, she has to reckon with the solitary pangs of displacement. We are also taken through glimpses of a rocky past, the life with her family she left behind in the Philippines. She had a tough upbringing and fled to carve out a life on her own terms. As the three siblings lounge in the garden, resentments and tiffs seem to break out, long repressed. A conversation is broached. There's so much that has to be confronted in all its ugliness and woeful reality.



A still from "Where The Night Stands Still" (*Come la notte*, 2025)

The siblings also speculate on her true relationship with her late employer. Could it have been a deeper, far more intimate one, beyond the stated dynamic? She confesses to not quite being at home and anchored in the estate. She can't move through it with freedom and perfect, guilt-free mobility. Yet she feels inordinately tied to the house. She struggles to claim it as her new home that wholly belongs to her. She chafes at their advice to sell it off. Lila emphasizes being obligated to its owner, the implicit vow made between them. She can't just shuffle it aside. It's a binding bond lasting beyond death. But what of sudden health issues? How can she cope with emergencies all on her own?

Shot in monochrome, "Where The Night Stands Still" weighs the shadow of exile. It's very composed and sedate, quietly appraising the fallout of the immigrant's constant economic dependency. Even when materially the circumstances may have swerved for the better, a sense of freedom of being is endlessly deferred. The ties that bind don't easily loosen. Instead, it sinks deep. Cruz has great formal command over the framing, pulling us into the fold of his narrative with quiet confidence.

Though the film skirts a dense emotional interiority, it traces the dynamics with precision. A swirl of memories underpins the drama, that lurches to a shocker of a twist, insinuations of which are subtly laid out earlier. The film breathes softly through its buildup, resulting in a climax ringing with a sharp sense of inevitability. With a spectral presence, the past hovers, irrevocably shaping what's to come as the narrative unfurls.

Where The Night Stands (*Come la notte*) Still premiered at the [Berlin Film Festival 2025](#).

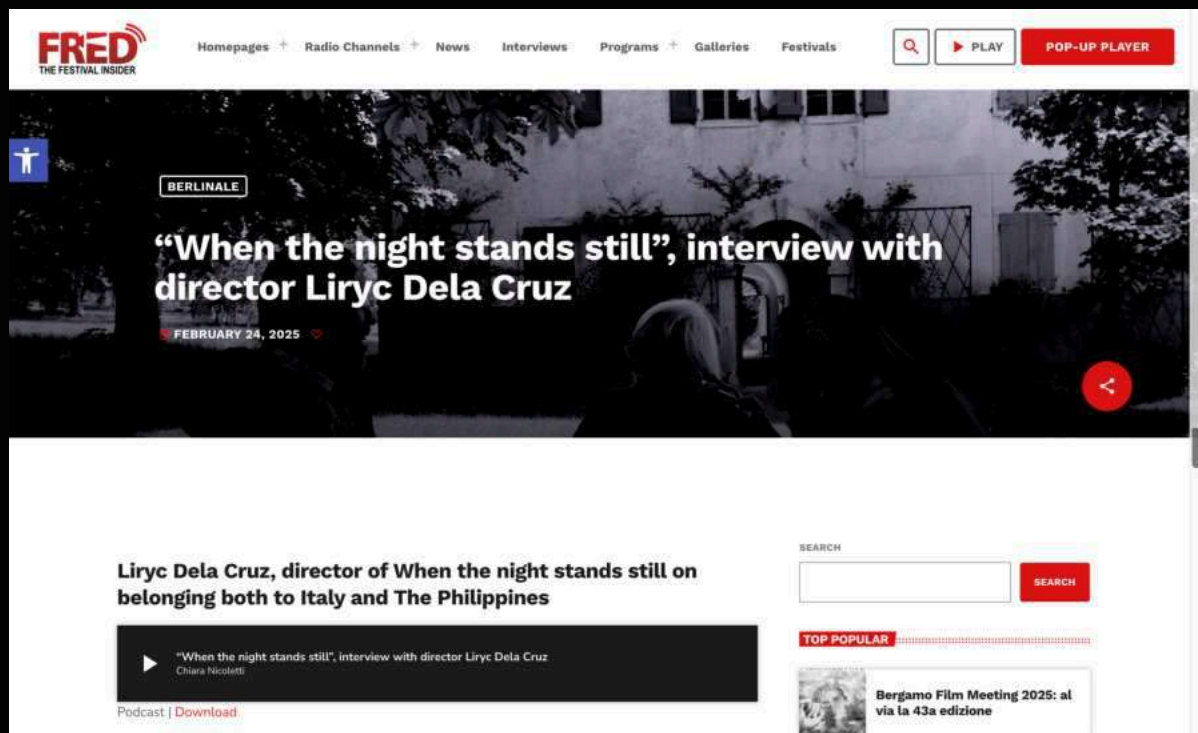


## ARTICLES

24 February 2025 **Fred**

Interview with director Liryc Dela Cruz

[Liryc Dela Cruz, director of When the night stands still on belonging both to Italy and The Philippines](#)



## ARTICLES

Liryc Dela Cruz is at the 75th Berlinale with his directorial debut feature **"When the night stands still – Come la notte"**.

The film, set in Italy is a co-production between Italy and the Philippines and it follows three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, reunite in their older sister Lilia's inherited villa.

The idea came to **Dela Cruz** as he proceeded to mix up all the tales he heard from friends in Italy and turn those stories into a film.

While depicting the dynamics and interactions between these three siblings, **Dela Cruz's** idea was to explore, on a very deep and personal level, the silent corrosive legacy that colonialism has left on the Filipino psyche.

Founder of **"Il Mio filippino collective"**, when asked if he feels more italian or philippine, **Dela Cruz** admits to feel both and that, despite all its contradictions and often racism, he still feels very connected to Italy as his land.

### PLOT

After years of separation, three Filipino siblings, all domestic workers in Italy, reunite in their older sister Lilia's inherited villa. As the night deepens, their long-awaited reunion stirs old memories and unspoken grievances. The air is thick with the weight of what has been left unsaid over time, as the siblings navigate the delicate distance that has grown between them. In the stillness of the villa, they wrestle with an unnameable ache, their shared history unfolding in fragments, revealing the quiet yet profound marks of absence, longing, and fractured connection.

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### ARTICLES

24 February 2025 **Film Rezensionen (DE)**

Positive review

[Where the Night Stands Still](#)



### Where the Night Stands Still

Rouven Linnarz Italy Philippines Sunday, February 23, 2025



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Lillia ( **Tess Magallanes** ) worked in the house of a wealthy Italian lady for 35 years until the lady died as a result of a corona infection and left her all her fortune and her villa. After years of separation, they visit their siblings Rosa ( **Jenny Llanto Carnigal** ) and Manny ( **Benjamin Vasquez Barcelano Jr.** ), who, like Lillia, once came to Italy to find a job and send some money to their family in the Philippines every month. The first few hours are filled with the joy of seeing each other again and the memories they exchange. But then tensions arise because, unlike their big sister, Manny and Rosa have had little luck finding a permanent job in Italy. They want to return to their homeland and get their sister to sell the house so that they can use the money to live in the Philippines without worries. Lillia, on the other hand, doesn't want to sell, which leads to arguments between the siblings.

### THE PHILIPPINE EXPERIENCE

In a statement about his new film *Where the Night Stands Still*, Filipino director **Liryc Dela Cruz** explains that it depicts an experience shared by many of his compatriots. The country's long history of colonization, migration and survival is reflected in the film's three main characters, he says. Thus, *Where the Night Stands Still*, which is currently showing at the **Berlinale**, is a story about aspects such as home and identity in the face of the reality of a culture whose members are scattered across Europe and many other continents for political or economic reasons. Despite this dispersion or the sporadic success stories, the impression of this long, problematic history does not leave the collective memory and hangs like the sword of Damocles over the film's three characters.

Dela Cruz's film begins with a telling deception that reveals a lot about the perception of Filipinos in our society. The long shots show the arduous daily routine of Lillia, who is busy cleaning the various rooms of the spacious property. She briefly exchanges words with the mistress of the house, it seems, but as we quickly learn, this was more of a monologue. The fact that she is the mistress of the house, who is also supposed to own the land around it, is too much of a good thing even for her arriving siblings and is met with incredulous, astonished looks. The perception of the Filipino as a servant is a common sight, so a success story like Lillia's is more the exception than the rule.



ARTICLES

Dela Cruz repeatedly plays with this perception, for example when he follows the characters in long shots as they walk through the property or eat lunch outside in the garden. They always seem like foreign bodies and, with the exception of Lillia, see themselves as such. Her older sister no longer fits into the narrative of Filipinos in Europe and has dropped out of a routine of jobs in the service sector or as an illegal immigrant, where they can barely make ends meet. The new reality in which her older sister lives is the beginning of a confrontation with the vision of the life that the three of them had imagined when they left their homeland, and the look in the mirror is not necessarily pleasant.

MEMORIES OF THE LAND THAT DOES NOT BELONG TO US

In *Where the Night Stands Still*, two new visions of the future collide. When Lillia talks about planting fruit and vegetables from her homeland in the spacious garden, she is carefully formulating a future in which the family could perhaps live here. Rosa and Manny, on the other hand, want to get out of this country that was never their friend and go home with the money. In his script, Dela Cruz repeatedly plays with the dynamics of his three characters, the potential for conflict between these two ideas about how things should continue.

There are also numerous subtle references to the history of the land the three have left behind but still have within them, such as the idea of a land "that never belonged to them," which is one of the many double meanings in the dialogue. It is true that they have been slaves both here and at home, as Manny says, but now a moment of stalemate has come to decide how to move on and whether to do so as a family.

(Advertisement)

WHERE THE NIGHT STANDS STILL



CONCLUSION

"Where the Night Stands Still" is a thoughtful, elegantly filmed drama about home, identity and the history of a culture that still remains in the collective memory of its members. Liryc Dela Cruz succeeds in making a film about the cohesion of a family after years of alienation and distance and how to deal with the years spent living far away from one's true home.

Reader Rating 0 Ratings

### ARTICLES

24 February 2025 **ODG Magazine**

Positive review

[Una Prospettiva Sul Futuro](#)

## UNA PROSPETTIVA SUL FUTURO

di Omar Franini, Antonio Orrico, Cecilia Parini, Arturo Garavaglia e Lorenzo Sartor

NC-279

24.02.2025

Uno dei cambiamenti più drastici della Berlinale di quest'anno è stata l'eliminazione di Encounters, la sezione creata da Carlo Chatrian per presentare lungometraggi sperimentali, un mix affascinante di opere narrative e documentaristiche. Al suo posto è stata introdotta Perspectives, una sezione dedicata a opere prime, scelte senza un criterio ben definito. Guardando il programma del Festival, infatti, si nota che in ogni sezione sono stati presentati lungometraggi d'esordio, suscitando spontaneamente la domanda sul motivo della creazione di questa nuova categoria. Nonostante ciò, visionare i film di Perspectives si è rivelato un'esperienza affascinante, che ci ha offerto uno sguardo su alcune delle voci emergenti del panorama cinematografico, destinate a calcare i più grandi palcoscenici internazionali. Oggi vi proponiamo una panoramica delle principali opere che ci hanno colpito di più.

### ARTICLES

*Come la notte*, di Liryc Dela Cruz



Liryc Dela Cruz è un regista filippino che negli ultimi anni ha conquistato la scena mondiale, affermandosi come una nuova voce del cinema in grado di raccogliere l'eredità di grandi autori come Lav Diaz. Proprio con Diaz, Dela Cruz muove i suoi primi passi nella Settima Arte, iniziando la sua carriera come aiuto regista in due film dell'autore, *Prologo Sa Ang Dakilang Desaparecido* (2013) e soprattutto *Norte, Hangganan ng Kasaysayan* (2013), quest'ultimo presentato al Festival di Cannes dello stesso anno. La sua collaborazione con Diaz prosegue anche con un cameo in *Mula Sa Kung Ano Ang Noon* (2014), consolidando la sua presenza nel panorama del grande cinema filippino contemporaneo. Il debutto ufficiale alla regia arriva nel 2015 con il cortometraggio *The Ebb of Forgetting*, una riflessione onirica e sognante sulla memoria, dove due sorelle si confrontano sui grandi dilemmi della vita, come il legame tra esistenza e morte, e il rapporto con i propri cari. Successivamente, Dela Cruz realizza il suo primo lungometraggio, *Notes From Unknown Maladies* (2018), in cui torna nella sua città natale per raccontare, attraverso uno stile documentaristico, la malattia della nonna, Concepcion, una donna di 94 anni tormentata dai ricordi del passato e dai traumi legati alle guerre interne filippine, oltre che dalla perdita della memoria. Anche *On Endings* (2020), in cui Dela Cruz racconta in prima persona il distacco forzato dalla madre a causa del COVID, e *Santelmo* (2021), un mediometraggio ispirato al fenomeno atmosferico che si crea nei campi elettrici dei temporali, sono opere degne di nota. Tuttavia, è proprio in questo 2025 che il regista filippino ha compiuto il suo esordio ufficiale nel circuito dei Festival presentando alla Berlinale *Come la notte*. Il film segue un percorso simile a quello delle opere precedenti, raccontando una riunione tra tre fratelli, lavoratori domestici stabiliti in Italia, in una villa ereditata da una delle sorelle. Rispetto ai lavori precedenti, però, questo lungometraggio è caratterizzato da un maggior senso di alienazione, espressione perfetta del sentimento legato all'immigrazione e all'immaginario coloniale che avvolge il popolo filippino. Con immagini filmate con camera fissa e un bianco e nero che richiama lo stile di Diaz, il film racconta un "colonialismo 2.0", soprattutto attraverso i silenzi e i non detti dei protagonisti. Questi ultimi mantengono una crescente tensione che culmina nel finale, dove il lavoro sul suono e sulla diegesi acquisisce un'importanza ancora maggiore.



ARTICLES

25 February 2025 **The Upcoming**  
Interview with Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes,  
Caringal & Barcellano  
[Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes, Caringal &  
Barcellano on Where the Night Stands Still at  
Berlin 2025](#)



Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes, Caringal & Barcellano on Where the Night Stands Still at Berlin 2025

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46 views 25 Feb 2025  
Liryc Dela Cruz, Magallanes, Caringal & Barcellano on Where the Night Stands Still at Berlin 2025: Sibling reunion, no script & cinema's power

Dela Cruz and the team faced numerous challenges during production, including financial constraints and the task of eliciting authentic performances from a cast that included both seasoned and novice actors. Despite these hurdles, the film successfully captures the raw, genuine interactions that give it its emotional depth.

Reflecting on the film's impact, Dela Cruz hopes it will inspire viewers to appreciate the transformative power of cinema. By intimately portraying a family's journey through their differences and shared history, the film serves as a lens for exploring broader themes of identity, migration, and the human condition. The discussion around the film highlights its role as a testament to the power of collaborative storytelling and the enduring ability of cinema to spark meaningful dialogue and understanding. Where the Night Stands Still is not just a film; it's a celebration of the art of filmmaking and its potential to illuminate the complexities of human life.

Interviewer: Sarah Bradbury  
Editing: Olivia Barker

## ARTICLES

1 March 2025

**Sentieri Selvaggi (IT)**

Positive review

[Like the Night, by Liryc Dela Cruz](#)

### **Like the Night, by Liryc Dela Cruz**

Powerful debut from the Rome-based Filipino filmmaker, a family story that becomes a snapshot of the Filipino diaspora, in a space-time that seems immutable. BERLINALE 75 – Perspectives



ARTICLES

Liryc Dela Cruz's feature debut continues the ten-year work of the filmmaker from Mindanao who moved to Rome, and who has over time focused on the story of the so-called *Filipino diaspora* in Italy and in the capital: from this point of view, *Come la notte* takes up the black and white of the shots taken by Dela Cruz on the occasion of his beautiful photography exhibition at the Mattatoio, *Il Mio Filipino: For Those Who Care To See*, which later inspired the collective of the same name, which we find in the opening credits of the film.

The fixed wide shots and the absence of close-ups – with the exception of the extraordinary opening shot with the face of the female protagonist immersed in darkness, but crossed by restless metaphysical reflections of light – could recall the tradition of Filipino *slow cinema*, but on closer inspection the style of Dela Cruz, who directs, writes (together with the film's actors), edits and takes care of the photography of the work, seems equally crossed by the structures of Italian cinema, in full agreement with the snapshot of a *stateless* people, who find themselves having to live inside an image that sees them as a perpetual *guest*.

It is difficult not to go back to the ritual awakening of the maid Maria in *Umberto D* by Vittorio De Sica, witnessing this morning of solitary "housework" of the woman that *Come la notte* follows from the beginning, in this gigantic country villa where, we will soon understand, she lives alone after the death of the owner who kept her in service for over thirty years, that "Mrs. Patrizia" who then left her the sole heir of her home in the countryside. The protagonist awaits the visit of her two younger brothers, a man and a woman, but the *reunion* will bring with it its inevitable dose of friction from the past, ready to surface in an unreconciled manner, once again as if we were in an all-Italian *family drama* – or in a Lino Brocka?

Liryc Dela Cruz literally plays with the shadows, with the dark corners of a story that apparently seems "virtuous", almost Pasolinian if we want to stay as they say in the Italian galaxy (the maid in *Teorema* ?): the Filipino maid who is left as an inheritance by the rich landowners the house to which she has dedicated her entire life, a final act of "merciful" colonialism that has the result of further imprisoning the woman's life in those dusty walls – her younger sister and brother immediately notice this, both with jobs and families in Rome, in the city, who swoop in to make sure of the real situation of their firstborn.

Above all, the man carries a burden of anxiety and resentment, he who has never really aligned himself with his parents' choice to move to Italy: through the memories, stories and bickering of the three, the film retraces decades of stories common to many Filipino families, life in the fields as sharecroppers, then migration, the tired daily life in Italy - but it is on the *unreconciled* male character that Dela Cruz builds the true trajectory "across" this immutable scaffolding, the man wanders around the estate without peace, constantly "breaks" the placid drowsiness of this nature, designs with his "unpacified" movements the opposition to a resignation whose roots seem to have been lost in a vague and immeasurable time, like a strangled prayer, now unbearable.

The Searchers Movie Rating

3.6 ★★★★★

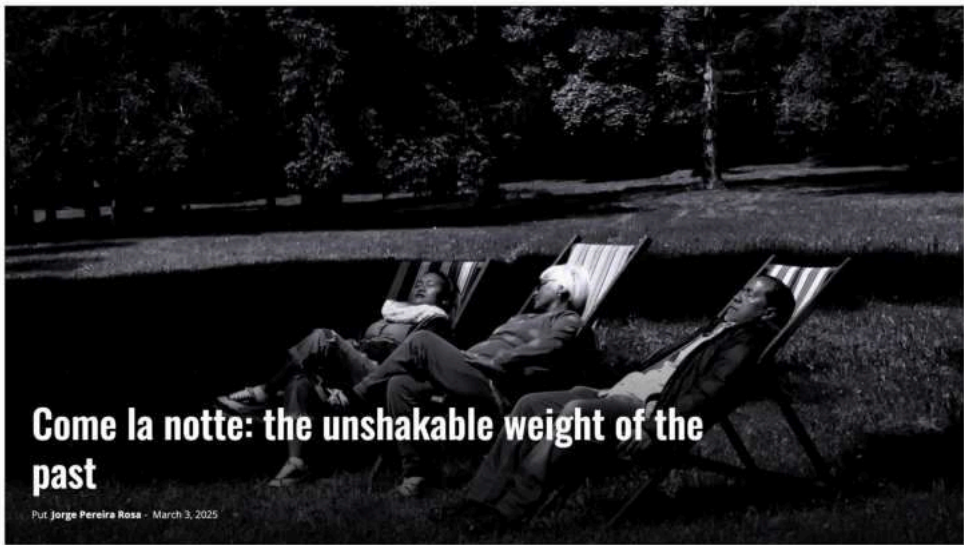
Readers' vote 0 ( 0 votes)





ARTICLES

3 March 2025    **C7nema (PT)**  
Positive review  
[Come la notte: the unshakable weight of the past](#)



A Rome-based artist and filmmaker originally from Mindanao in the Philippines, Liryc Dela Cruz has devoted time and attention to researching his origins, analyzing the social psychology of the Filipino people marked by colonization and forced migration in search of survival. This artistic investigation first manifested itself in the form of a feature film, "*Come la notte*" (*Where the Night Stands Still*), presented in the *Perspectives* section of the 75th Berlinale, but his focus began much earlier, with the art installation that mixed video and performance "*Il Mio Filipino: For Those Who Care To See*".

Constructed from a hypnotic black and white, with an economy of three dozen static shots where the depth of field, shadows and light not only exemplify how aesthetics are narrative, but also create a feeling of discomfort and nervous mystery in the face of the apparent luxury of the location, "*Come la notte*" is a chase after the ghosts of the past based on the reunion between three siblings, all exiled in Italy, when one of the characters, Lila (Tess Magallanes), to her great surprise, inherits a huge mansion from her deceased boss, with whom she worked for more than 35 years.

In the first images we have access to, Dela Cruz shows the old woman deep cleaning a space that imposes its grandeur and comfort, then stopping the task when the two siblings, Rosa (Jenny Llanto Caringal) and Manny (Benjamin Vasquez Barcellano Jr), arrive at the place, coming from Rome, to visit her for the first time in years.

OTHER REVIEWS



THE JACKET: AN IDENTITY MADE OF PATCHES  
★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆



DEAR BEAUTIFUL BELOVED: THE HARSHNESS OF WAR AGAINST THE MOST FRAGILE  
★ ★ ★ ★ ☆



PERSONALE: LIGHT IN THE SHADOWS OF THOSE WHO WORK  
★ ★ ★ ★ ☆



"TARIKA": MILKO LAZAROV RETURNS WITH A TIMELESS TALE  
★ ★ ★ ★ ☆



SANDBAG DAM: THE OVERFLOW OF PASSION  
★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆



SPECIAL OPERATION: DEFERRED CRIMES  
★ ★ ☆ ☆ ☆



UNDER THE FLAGS, THE SUN: JUANJO PEREIRA BREAKS THE SILENCE ABOUT...  
★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

ARTICLES

What follows are conversations that reveal the younger siblings' discomfort with Lila, who, with the toxic paternalism that characterized her in the life decisions she imposed on the younger ones, will raise the dust of time and family resentments. Questioning the true relationship that Lila had with her former boss, and even cursing her luck in being awarded the mansion, the pair are divided in their opinions about their current situation. Rosa is exasperated by the reason why Lila does not sell the mansion and return to the Philippines to live with her clan, while Manny complains about the way of life that his sister imposed on him in the past and that turned him into a labor actor always prepared to serve someone, giving clear signs of an economic dependence that was created in the form of modern slavery. In a non-explicit and indirect way, Liryc Dela Cruz thus addresses the feeling of displacement characteristic of post-colonial societies bathed in mass migrations, revealing internal voids and pains capable of exploding at any moment.



Filmed in a space where grandeur, silence and isolation reflect comfort and perpetuate a calm of unspoken words, "*Come la notte*" quickly throws itself into the contrast between the material and the immaterial, latent in the turbulent series of sensations and thoughts that fill the interior of the characters, repressed by their stories and past. In this, Dela Cruz not only burdens the mansion itself with the weight of the past, but transforms it into an essential piece of the existential chessboard of a family that has long been irremediably fragmented.

Overall Score

Jorge Pereira

SUMMARY

Liryc Dela Cruz thus addresses the feeling of displacement characteristic of post-colonial societies bathed in mass migrations, revealing internal voids and pains capable of exploding at any moment.

★★★★☆

3.5

★★★★☆  
OVERALL SCORE

- BEGINNINGS: TRINE DYRHOLM ELEVATES GRITTY FAMILY DRAMA TO THE MAINSTREAM  
★★★★☆
- MICKEY 17: BONG JOON HO'S DELIRIOUS RETURN FEATURES...  
★★★★☆
- TALES FROM THE MAGIC GARDEN: THE POWER OF STORYTELLING AS THERAPY...  
★★★★☆
- THE BATTLE OF MARIA ANTONIA STREET: MEMORIES OF LEAD  
★★★★☆
- THE EMPIRE: BRUNO DUMONT RETURNS TO THE "PETIT QUINQUIN" UNIVERSE  
★★★★☆
- "MEMORIES OF A SNAIL" IS CHARMING DUE TO ITS STOP-MOTION, BUT IT SLIPS INTO CARICATURE  
★★★★☆
- KONTINENTAL'25: ALWAYS SATIRICAL, RADU JUDE LEAVES HIS MARK ONCE AGAIN  
★★★★☆
- SORDA: IN A WORLD OF LISTENERS, FEW REALLY LISTEN  
★★★★☆

- NEWS
- POST-WAR BRITISH CINEMA IN FOCUS AT LOCARNO FILM FESTIVAL
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