

Los
Otros

THE REMOTES

A FILM BY JOHN TORRES

LOGLINE

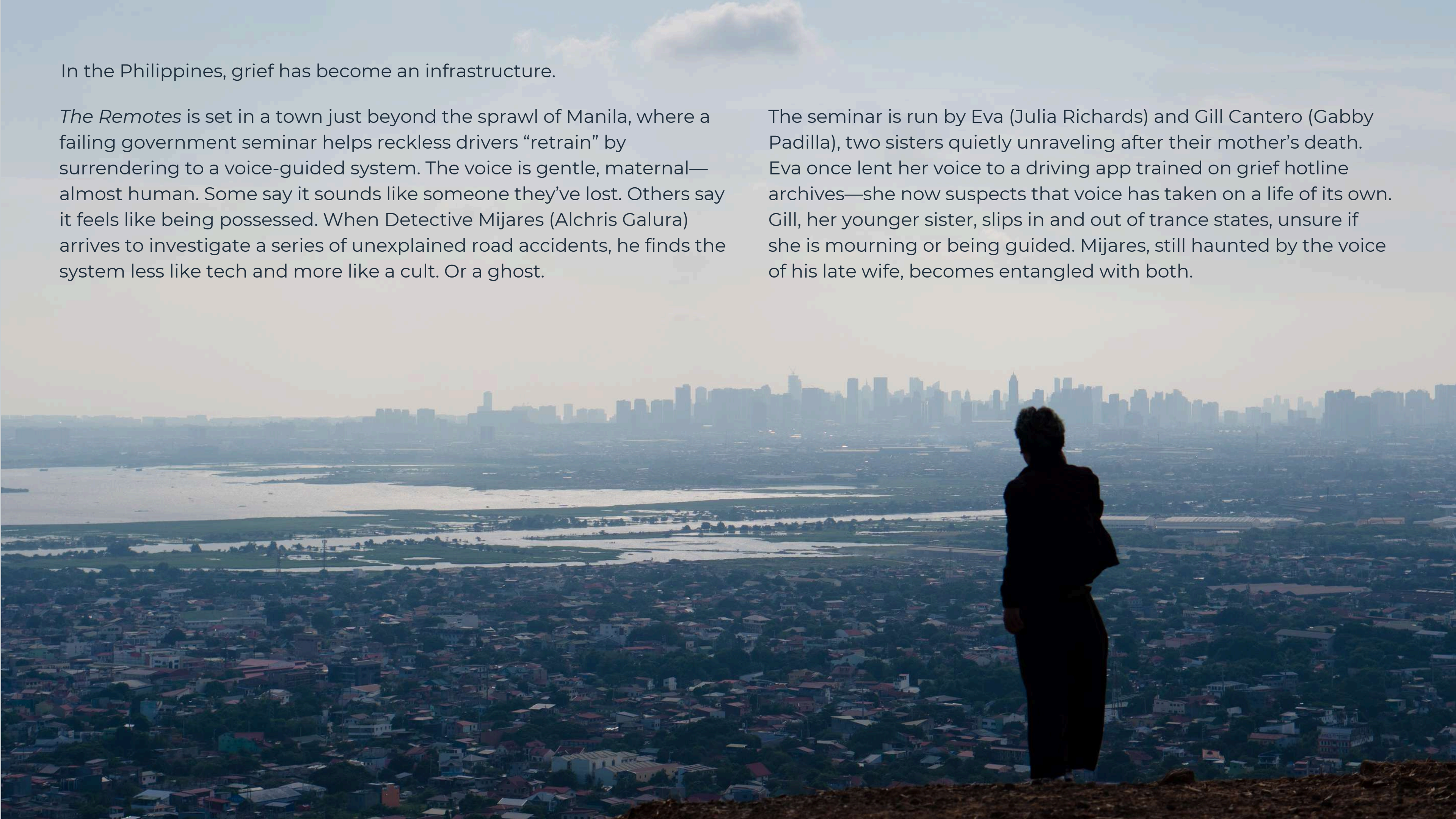
Days before migrating abroad, a grieving detective investigates two sisters linked to a sinister navigation app, only to find himself slowly surrendering to the unseen voices controlling the city and his own lingering sorrow.

TITLE THE REMOTES | **GENRE** SCI-FI / NOIR / DRAMA | **RUNNING TIME** 153 MINS | **DIRECTOR** JOHN TORRES | **WRITERS** DODO DAYAO, JOHN TORRES
PRODUCERS SHERAD ANTHONY SANCHEZ, JOHN TORRES | **PRODUCTION COMPANY** LOS OTROS FILMS | **COUNTRY** THE PHILIPPINES | **IN ASSOCIATION WITH** THIS SIDE UP, PROJECT 8 PROJECTS, INDIEFLIP, POPPLE PICTURES, CMB FILM SERVICES, WAPAK STUDIOS | **WITH SUPPORT FROM** PURIN PICTURES, FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES, CREATEPH, QCINEMA PROJECT MARKET, HAF HONG KONG ASIA FILM FINANCING FORUM | **COUNTRY** THE PHILIPPINES

In the Philippines, grief has become an infrastructure.

The Remotes is set in a town just beyond the sprawl of Manila, where a failing government seminar helps reckless drivers “retrain” by surrendering to a voice-guided system. The voice is gentle, maternal—almost human. Some say it sounds like someone they’ve lost. Others say it feels like being possessed. When Detective Mijares (Alchris Galura) arrives to investigate a series of unexplained road accidents, he finds the system less like tech and more like a cult. Or a ghost.

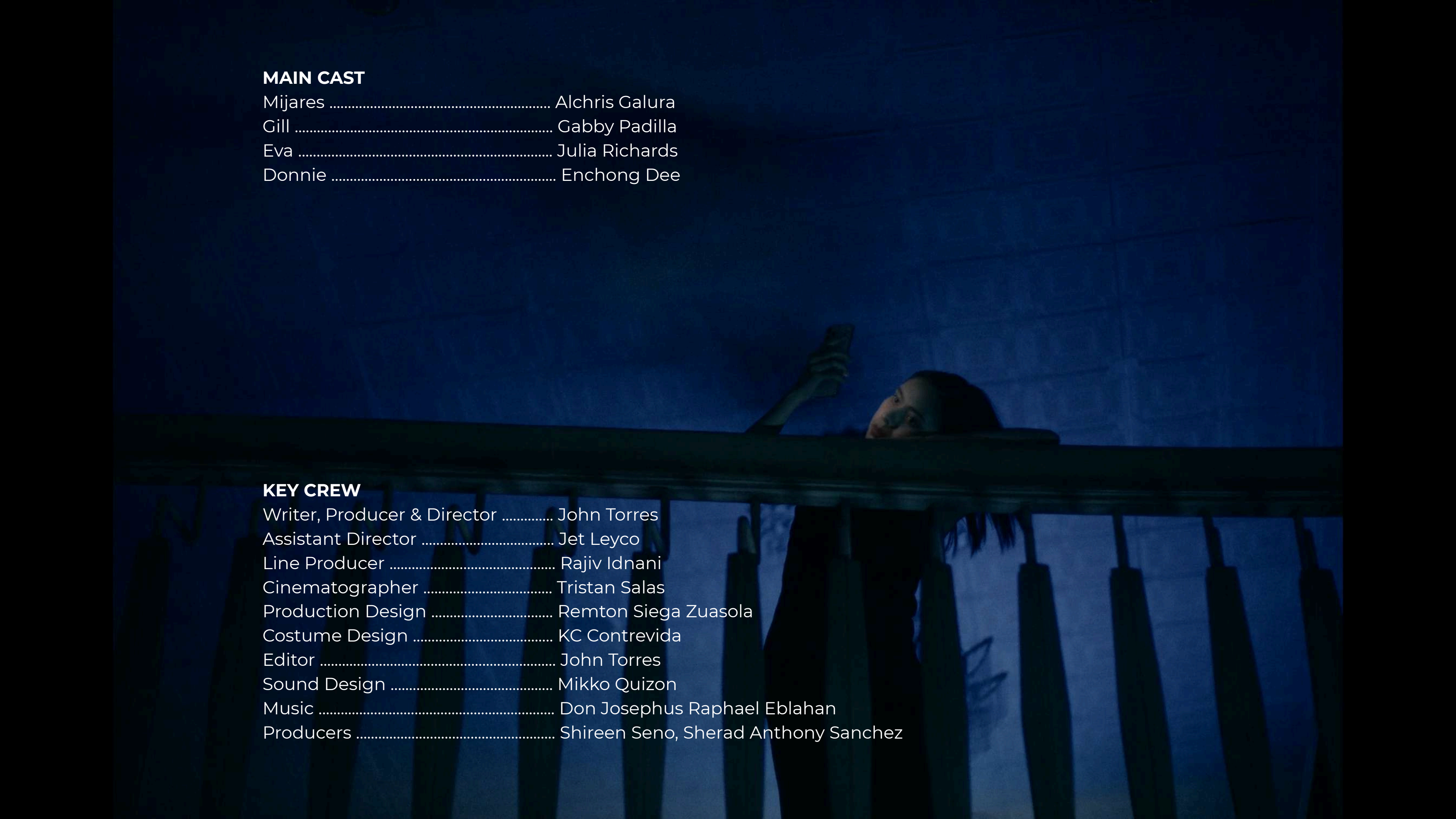
The seminar is run by Eva (Julia Richards) and Gill Cantero (Gabby Padilla), two sisters quietly unraveling after their mother’s death. Eva once lent her voice to a driving app trained on grief hotline archives—she now suspects that voice has taken on a life of its own. Gill, her younger sister, slips in and out of trance states, unsure if she is mourning or being guided. Mijares, still haunted by the voice of his late wife, becomes entangled with both.





Told through a spare visual language, *The Remotes* merges noir procedural with surreal offbeat romance. The atmosphere is subdued but uncanny. The film interrogates systems of control both intimate and institutional: state surveillance, tech platforms, and the inheritance of trauma.

This is a film about postcolonial grief, the automation of feeling, and what happens when you are no longer the driver of your own life. A love story in the wrong key. A ghost story with no clear ghost.

A woman is seen from the chest up, looking over a dark balcony railing. She is holding a smartphone in her right hand, looking at the screen. The background is a dark, textured wall, possibly stone or brick, illuminated by a soft blue light. The overall mood is contemplative and quiet.

MAIN CAST

Mijares Alchris Galura
Gill Gabby Padilla
Eva Julia Richards
Donnie Enchong Dee

KEY CREW

Writer, Producer & Director John Torres
Assistant Director Jet Leyco
Line Producer Rajiv Idnani
Cinematographer Tristan Salas
Production Design Remton Siega Zuasola
Costume Design KC Contrevida
Editor John Torres
Sound Design Mikko Quizon
Music Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan
Producers Shireen Seno, Sherad Anthony Sanchez



My mother watched my films, but she never quite understood what I was trying to say.

She preferred the cinema of laughter and tears. The loud dramas, the clean resolutions, the stars with perfect timing. She sat through my work with polite curiosity, sometimes confusion, sometimes pride. But she always asked the same question:

Son, when will you make a real film?

Now, she's dead. And the only way I can see her again is to make a film that she knows. So *The Remotes* is my answer to her.

Why am I still listening to my mother's voice when she's controlled me for so long? Why do I still seek her out when she is nowhere near. I am under her spell. Awake. Fully capable. And yet moved by a voice I can't un-hear. Authoritative yet tender. A ghost with instructions. A ghost with a rhythm.



Am I perpetually longing to be controlled? (Like my country)

The Remotes explores this hunger to surrender. Especially when the voice giving commands feels like home. It centers on the grief of losing a loved one, then hearing her speak again inside a headset, controlling your body, guiding you through roads you've never driven, asking nothing in return but obedience.

Gillian and Eva, sisters who stumble into this app-world while grieving. Mijares, a police officer losing grip on reality as he grieves his wife's mysterious death, uncovers a network of controlled bodies and familiar voices. One that might include his dead wife, and a voice that sounds uncannily like Eva.

The Remotes is about how longing can become infrastructure. How grief stifles us while technology listens in and automates our choices in life. This is a world where people willingly surrender to it because it brings them closer to someone they lost, or someone they used to be.



"John Torres has the sensibility of a romantic poet, the mode of address of a personal essayist, and an anthropologist's curious, lingering, critical eye."

—Cinema Scope

JOHN TORRES (b. 1975) is an independent filmmaker, musician, and writer, known for his highly personal and poetic style. His work fictionalizes and reworks personal and found documentations of love, family relations, and memory in relation to current events, hearsay, myth, and folklore. Weaving together archival clips, found footage, and visually powerful imagery, his films unfold narrative structures, often with strong autobiographical references, that defy conventional tropes and genres.

John emerged alongside a generation of friends and collaborators that included Lav Diaz, Khavn De La Cruz, and Raya Martin, part of what the Harvard Film Archive has called a "veritable Filipino New Wave."

In 2006, he was awarded the Dragons & Tigers Award for Young Cinema at the 25th Vancouver International Film Festival for his debut feature, *Todo Todo Teros*, with a jury that included filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul. That connection continued in 2025 at Apichatpong's Bangkok Experimental Film Festival, where John presented the film-performance version of *Room in a Crowd*, commissioned by the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts through Los Angeles Filmforum.



John has made six features and more than a dozen short films including, *The Remotes* (2006), his narrative feature debut.

He was a featured artist at The Flaherty Seminar in 2018, invited by that year's curators Kevin Jerome Everson and Greg de Cuir Jr., and an artist-in-residence at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art (NTU CCA) Singapore in 2019.

In 2024, he returned to Toronto as Filmmaker-in-Residence at the University of Toronto, where he delivered the artist talk "Parasitical Filmmaking Strategies (Or, How Familial Relationships Influence Our Filmmaking)."

Together with Shireen Seno of Los Otros, a Manila-based platform for the intersections of film and art, John is the recipient of the 2025 Han Nefkens Foundation, Mori Art Museum, M+ and Singapore Art Museum – Moving Image Commission.

A special focus of John's works was shown in Oberhausen in 2024 and at the Viennale in 2013. In 2018, Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival gave John and Shireen their first major UK retrospective, alongside a seminar the two co-led on Los Otros' history, community, and working methods.



SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY

Todo Todo Teros (2006)

"This film shows that low-grade video can be art, while adopting an evocative, surprising approach to the issue of terrorism."

—Vancouver International Film Festival

Years When I was a Child Outside (2008)

"This avant-gardist video essay requires the reappraisal of some criteria used in film criticism. Like Baudelaire who suggested the distinction between 'a work that is complete' and 'a work that is finished'."

—Jeonju International Film Festival

Refrains Happen Like Revolutions in a Song (2010)

"A film essayist who creates delicate lullabies out of difficult subjects such as colonialism and racial and economic inequity, John Torres collects fragments and then weaves them together in a dense fabric that's equal parts Borges, Resnais and Rouch." —BAFICI

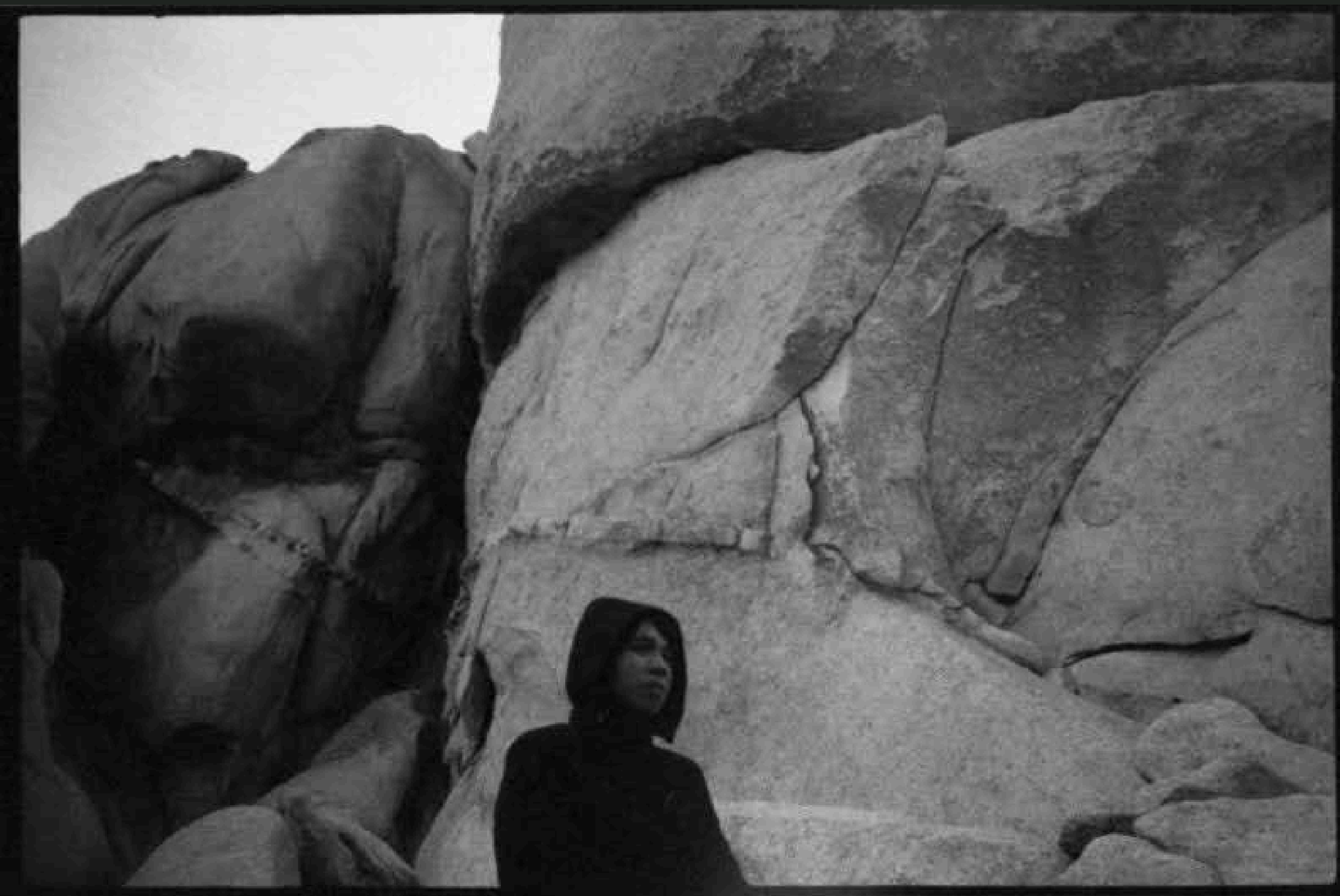
Lukas the Strange (2013)

"A stunning and disorientating film on the magic of life and the magic of cinema." —Edinburgh International Film Festival

People Power Bombshell: The Diary of Vietnam Rose (2017)

"Transplanting his aesthetic approach onto wider narratives... a unique, emotive proposition mixing personal insight with a broader sense of national collective consciousness." —Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival / Sight & Sound





"John Torres is the poet of
Philippine cinema. A poet with
his own rules and ways of working."
—International Film Festival Rotterdam

"He stands out above the other
filmmakers of the generation of
independent filmmakers and their
boom cinema of the present,
as he is one of the most conscious
of his art, and its purveyance
in his art cinema."
—Rolando Tolentino, critic

"...Torres is not only one of the best
Filipino directors of his generation,
but also one of the (already fulfilled)
promises of contemporary cinema."
—Festival Internacional de Cine UNAM

ENCHONG DEE

Filipino actor, singer, model, host, and former national swimmer. A standout contract artist for ABS-CBN's Star Magic, he rose to fame after starring in the hit 2009 TV drama *Katorse*.





JULIA RICHARDS

Youtube influencer and actor. Julia is the face associated with multi-million dollar houses. She hosts the Presello House Tour Videos and Build Your Own series found on YouTube. *The Remotes* is her debut film as an actor.



GABBY PADILLA

Awarded Filipino film and theater actor. Known for her captivating performances in TV, film, and theater, such as *Dead Kids* and *Billie and Emma*.

ALCHRIS GALURA

Filipino actor, singer, director, and model. He plays Mijares, the grieving investigator with a troubled past.















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hi@los-otros.com

los-otros.com

PRESS CONTACT

Samantha Chater

samanthachater@gmail.com