

Venice Golden Lion winner â??The Woman Who Leftâ?• finds distributor

Description



(Photo courtesy of ASAC Images/Biennale Cinema/Hazel Orencio)

PanARMENIAN.Net â?? Despite skepticism that it would ever make it into cinemas, Filipino auteur Lav Diazâ??s nearly four-hour-long opus **â??The Woman Who Leftâ?•**, which won the Venice Film Festivalâ??s Golden Lion, is set for theatrical release in Italy by local niche distributor Microcinema, Variety said.

Microcinema has acquired Italian rights to the revenge drama from Berlin-based Films Boutique and plans to distribute it theatrically in coming months, in spite of comments in the press and on social media that the movieâ??s 228-minute running time made it too hard a sell.

Sam Mendes, who presided over this yearâ??s Venice jury, said during the awards ceremony that one of the juryâ??s jobs is â??to encourage people to come to the cinema and see original films,â?• while also noting that the jurors in discussions â??talked about all movies the same way.â?•

â??Mendes and the jury chose to give the Golden Lion to a film that thinks outside the box,â?• said Microcinema managing director Roberto Bassano. â??And we are also planning to think a bit different.â?•

Bassano acknowledged that releasing â??The Woman Who Left,â?• which stars Charo Santos-Cancio as a wrongly convicted schoolteacher facing the outside world after 30 years behind bars, would be â??a business challengeâ?• both in terms of finding ticket buyers and exhibitors unfazed by the â??double screen timeâ?• taken up by the movie.

But he said that several art-house exhibitors, and also some Italian multiplexes in metropolitan areas, have already expressed interest. â??Itâ??s a slow burner, the kind of film you open small and expect to have legs on a few screens,â?• Bassano said.

An Italian release of â??The Woman Who Leftâ?• would mark the first time a movie directed by Diaz made it into Italian cinemas, and also a rare release of one of his films in Europe.

Upcoming Italian releases by Microcinema, which uses a satellite transmission system to beam movies into movie theaters, include Argentinian romcom â??No Kids,â?• directed by Ariel Winograd.

â??The Woman Who Left,â?• shot in black-and-white with long fixed-camera takes, is considered one of Diazâ??s more accessible works, with a â??restrained run-time by the Filipino directorâ??s standards,â?• as Variety critic Guy Lodge put it.

Earlier this year, the prolific Diaz won the Berlin Film Festivalâ??s Silver Bear for his eight-hour historical epic, â??A Lullaby to the Sorrowful Mystery.â?• That film was released theatrically in the Philippines by Star Cinema and elsewhere only screened in festivals.



Ang Babaeng Humayo (The Woman Who Left) director/filmmaker, Lav Diz. (Photo courtesy of ASAC

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