

## WIP J Last Days at Sea



**REGION:** The Philippines

**GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:**

Documentary | Digital Format | Filipino, Tagalog, Bisaya | 70mins

**DIRECTOR:**

Venice ATIENZA

**PRODUCER:**

Venice ATIENZA

WU Fan

**HAF GOALS:**

Funds, Sales agents, Pre-sales, Festival Screening

**BUDGET:** US\$ 80,955

**SECURED BUDGET:** US\$ 58,793

**DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY**

First Feature Director

**ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS**

The film is a pause of life. It is an attempt to hold the precious moments of child-hood, to celebrate their beauty before they are left behind and are turned into memory.

## SYNOPSIS

I met Reyboy five years ago, when I was hired to produce a video about how an isolated fishing village in the southern Philippines survives during devastating storms. All twelve years of Reyboy's life belong there — the water rippling past him as he swims in the sea, the salt appearing as sea droplets dry on his back, the games played in the forest with his cousins, and the nights spent under the stars imagining the world beyond his hometown. When I found out that Reyboy is leaving to study in the city as there is no high school in his town, I returned to the village. With a camera in hand, we recorded the little things we wanted to remember together. As the Summer ended and gave way to the rain, I walked with Reyboy as he prepared to leave his home. In small gestures, he learns how to say goodbye to the only world he knows. As we stand at an intersection, between re-mem-bering the past and facing the future, we pause to take a last look at a childhood that will never return.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Meeting Reyboy reminded me of the child in me that I did not know I had forgotten. When I first met him, I immediately saw his ability to feel wonder towards nature in its details. He also helped me understand that the sea had the power to take life away. This encounter showed me how he was both young and old at the same time. I was touched by how he lived life with tenderness in spite of how difficult it was. The film will be made in such a way that it reflects my relation to the place and to Rey-boy. We invite the audience to get to know Reyboy's life and to walk with him in this passage from boyhood to the unknown future.

I fear that one day the difficulties he will face, will make him lose the openheartedness he possesses— the same qualities that I had lost as I was growing up. So, in the film, I try to do what is impossible in real life — to freeze time, to hold this beautiful childhood in our palms before it is left behind.

## DIRECTOR

### Venice ATIENZA

Venice Atienza is a Filipino documentary filmmaker and photographer. Stories have become a way for her to encounter life and brings her to the world of others. She was an associate producer for *Pinoy Hoops* (2013), a mini-series on the National Geographic Channel. She was a photographer for the World Health Organisation on the effects of typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. In 2017, she graduated from the — DocNomads Erasmus Mundus Program. She worked with Terratreme Filmes, Portugal before returning to Manila. Her film, *Last Days at Sea* (2020) is supported by the IDFA Bertha Fund Classic 2019.

## PRODUCER

### Venice ATIENZA

(same as director)

### WU Fan

Born in Taiwan, Wu Fan graduated with a BA in Sociology from National Taiwan University. Her short documentary, *Koike Kouji* (2015), was commissioned with a ViewPoint award by Public Television of Taiwan. She won national and European Union scholarships to join DocNomads Erasmus Mundus program in Documentary Filmmaking. Her film *A Roof in Common* (2018) was screened across Asia and Europe. She was the international coordinator of CNEX Chinese Documentary Forum (CCDF) 2018. She is producing Venice Atienza's *Last Days at Sea* (2020), and directing her first feature, *XiXi* (2021), supported by the National Documentary Fund.

## PRODUCTION COMPANY

### Svemirko Film Productions

Svemirko Film Productions was co-founded Venice Atienza (The Philippines), and Wu Fan (Taiwan) to direct and produce creative documentaries with strong personal stories that move us deeply. "Svemirko", is a word that originates from the former Yugoslavian region that means "dear little universe" or "a person from the cosmos" in English. Our hope is to bring to life stories that open up universes that exist but are often missed. We are producing Atienza's *Last Days at Sea*, awarded the IDFA Bertha Fund Classic 2019, and Wu's *XiXi*, awarded the National Documentary Production Fund — Taiwan 2019. We have been invited to join film markets including Lisbon Docs, Docedge Kolkata, and Docs By the Sea Indonesia.