



4-5 JULY 2019



“  
Thinking about the **cultural future**  
we're going to **make together**  
”

**L**ast July, I had a brisk, invigorating time in the UK with over 20 international artists who were invited by the British Council to the Wild Conference. It was a cultural event commissioned by Arts Council England and excellently produced by Slung Low in which hundreds of England's arts leaders and artists came together to have a wide range of conversations on the arts. Our delegation was comprised of filmmakers, festival directors, curators, journalists, arts managers, fashion designers, music producers, DJs, writers, activists, and other creative practitioners from around the globe in order to bring an international perspective and context to the discussions.



The Wild Conference was a series of talks, debates, discussions, and cabaret in a tented village around a campfire in the picturesque grounds of the Jacobethan Temple Newsam in Leeds. It was, indeed, a great space designed to be conducive to heart-to-heart conversations and meaningful candid connections. The talks were concurrently held in four big tents called the Tipy, the Wedding Tent, the Spiky Tent, and the Dome. We were all given a set of headphones and a receiver that allowed us to listen to any of the speakers anytime across the site, wander away, lie on the grass, nip off to the loo, or even find a spot to work on our laptops (as in my case) without missing out on the discussions. The conference's aesthetically stimulating setup was comparable to Coachella, Glastonbury Festival, or Ari Aster's Midsommar, as it deviated from the generally taxing business-focused conferences confined in air-conditioned suites.



# WILD CONFERENCE TEMPLE NEWSAM LEEDS UK





There was a great sense of interdisciplinarity in the conversations. Speakers came from all sorts of backgrounds and touched on very diverse topics ranging from power, neuroscience, intersectionality, digital culture, body language, creative spaces, and permaculture, to the creative and sociopolitical climate of different countries,

the future of the arts, and so forth. We sat around the campfire for debates on several concerns in the arts such as the worsening mental health issues of artists, lack of safe spaces for creative practitioners, challenges in arts education, competitiveness in the arts, devaluation of artists, and the lack of government support.



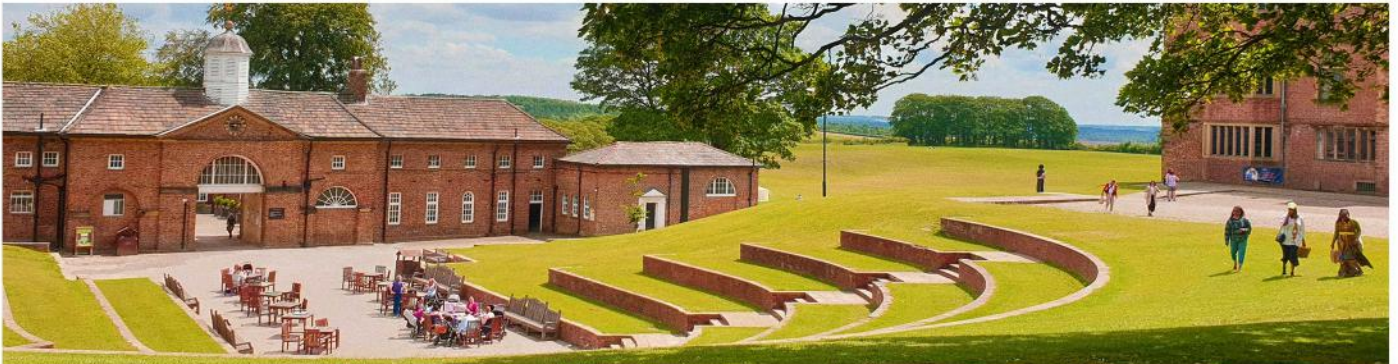
Diversity and inclusivity prevailed in the Wild Conference in a lot of ways, equally valuing under-represented groups such as ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, as well as the differently abled. First, a lot of the speakers and participants were from different racial and socio-economic backgrounds, allowing the participants to have a cross-cultural and intersectional look at the topics touched upon during the discussions. Second, the cabaret featured an all-female band, a queer group, a sign language performer, and a differently abled stand-up comedian. The conference created a safe space for these performers,

where they were appreciated and held in high regard. Third, every presentation in each of the tents had a sign language interpreter, making sure that the hearing-impaired attendees were very well involved. Fourth, I was delighted to find a crèche for children and to lie right beside a furry friend during a talk at the Dome; even children and dogs—who we referred to as the "super delegates"—were welcomed. Lastly, the conference was made affordable through their pay-what-you-decide policy, truly accommodating creative practitioners from all sorts of experiences and capacities.

# DIVERSITY INCLUSIVITY EQUALITY









One of the best things about the Wild Conference is that it was a perfect platform for artists to discuss anything about the arts and actually do something together. As for me, I had an initial discussion with Marielle Nadal-Reyes of Craft MNL about holding an arts festival together where I would curate a program of Filipino movies. Aside from that, my organization in the Philippines, the Film Producers Society, and Regil Cadavo's company, ASpace, are currently discussing the possibility of putting up an underground micro cinema in Metro Manila as our joint venture. All these opportunities were made possible by the British Council through our inclusion in the Wild Conference.

My time in the UK did not only help me build new relationships and explore new collaborations, but it also gave me a chance to catch up with some older collaborators from the London Film School who I met through the Creative Innovators Program—another initiative by the British Council. I am really grateful to the British Council for creating invaluable opportunities like these for those braving the creative industries and for bringing together artists that are hungry to collaborate, innovate, and flourish in their chosen fields. I truly hope that the British Council continues to be a champion of the arts and a source of support for creative practitioners, especially in developing countries like the Philippines where there is a large pool of talents that are only waiting to be discovered and supported in order to thrive. My country still has a long way to go before it can develop its creative economy to its full potential and ultimately make it sustainable for artists like me, but I am very thankful that the British Council is there to help us take small steps that would eventually make a huge impact.



“ Culture can be dangerous in the right hands. ”





# WILD CONFERENCE

REPORT BY **KYLE NIEVA**

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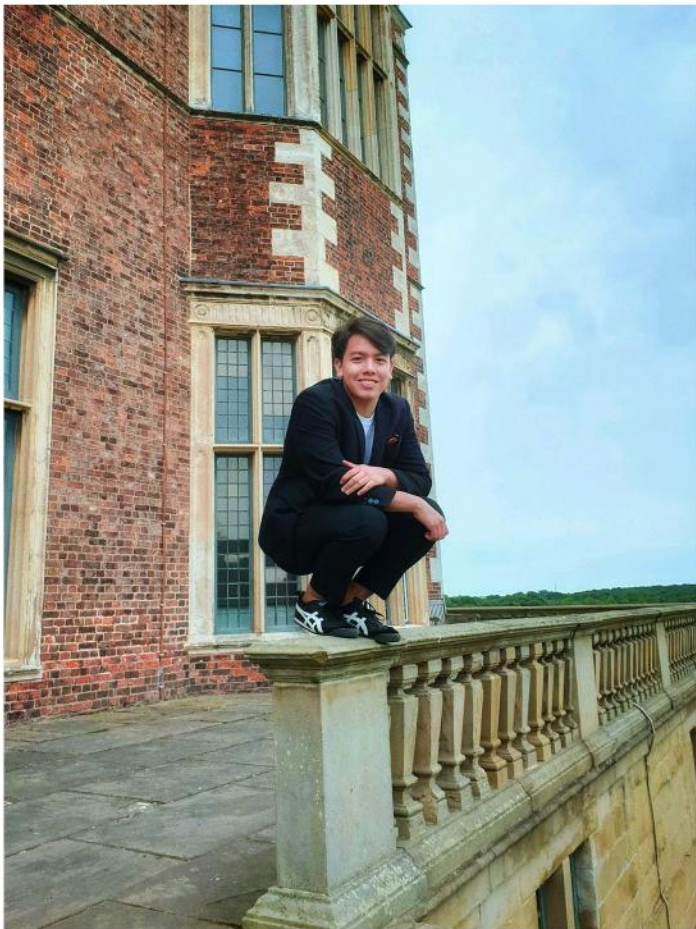
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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**K**yle Nieva is a 23-year-old filmmaker based in Manila. He took up a bachelor's degree in Film at the University of the Philippines Film Institute and is an alumnus of Tribeca Film Institute's Talent Lab. His short films have been recognized in the international scene and have been exhibited in more than 70 territories worldwide.

Kyle Nieva co-founded an organization called the Film Producers Society (FPS)—which provides alternative marketing and distribution for filmmakers—where he has served as the marketing director for both independent and mainstream movies. FPS has worked on several critically acclaimed works such as “Kita Kita” (dir. Sigrid Bernardo), the highest-grossing independent film in Philippine cinema; “Season of the Devil” (2018, dir. Lav Diaz), recipient of Berlin International Film Festival's Golden Bear (Best Film) Award; and the Oscar-nominated “The Florida Project” (2017, dir. Sean Baker), to name a few.

Aside from directing, producing, and marketing films, Kyle also serves as the director of the Cinemalaya Short Shorts Competition of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.