

Saturday, November 19, 2016

# Dreaming big with Anthony Diaz

By NR RAMOS

**Y**oung Filipino-American filmmaker Anthony Diaz V has submitted his first feature film "Break" to the prestigious Sundance Film Festival with fingers crossed it will make the cut.

"We'll know by December," he said. "I'm really hopeful because Sundance is the most prestigious film festival in the world as far as your film getting global recognition is concerned. More film buyers and distributors attend Sundance than any other film festival in the world. If you get accepted to Sundance, it's like hitting a home run."

Anthony also wrote, produced and stars in "Break," which is about a young Japanese-American trying to fit into Japanese society. It is said to blend American storytelling with Japanese cinema with touches of hip-hop.

"It's about the clash of cultures and trying to fit in," the actor offered. "I think it will resonate with people because it is something most of us have experienced in some form or another."

You'd think being partly Pinoy, Anthony would have chosen the Philippines as backdrop for "Break." Japan, however, is close to his heart, too, having visited the country several times as a child. He is now based there.

The actor said: "Actually I'm more familiar with Japan than the Philippines. I've been here like, a couple of times only; in 2011 and March of this year. I have been back twice since."

## Taste of local cinema

Anthony is immersing himself in local culture, particularly Filipino cinema.

"The only time I got a glimpse of the Filipino side of me was when I

spent time with my grandmother and grandfather. My grandmother on my mothers' side is from Cebu, while my grandfather is from Mindanao. When I visited grandma the first time, I met a whole bunch of family," he said.

The auteur has watched a couple of locally-produced films. His favourite is Erik Matti's "On The Job" which he found "very Hollywood."

"I wasn't expecting something like that from here. Most Filipino films I saw before were like love stories where the woman is always crying and the guy is a suffering macho man."

He looks forward to meeting and maybe even working with the best Pinoy directors and actors.

"I've heard a lot about Lav Diaz and I really want to jam with him," Anthony said. "I know there are a lot of good directors and actors here but I haven't met them yet. I hope I'd get to do that in the near future, maybe we could exchange ideas."

## What comes naturally

Anthony is partial to doing drama and action films as

"I like to do things that most filmmakers won't do. I want to raise questions with my work."

these come "easy" for him.

"It's much more natural, unlike comedy. Comedy is hard for me personally because I think it is very subjective. What might be funny to me might not be funny to you."

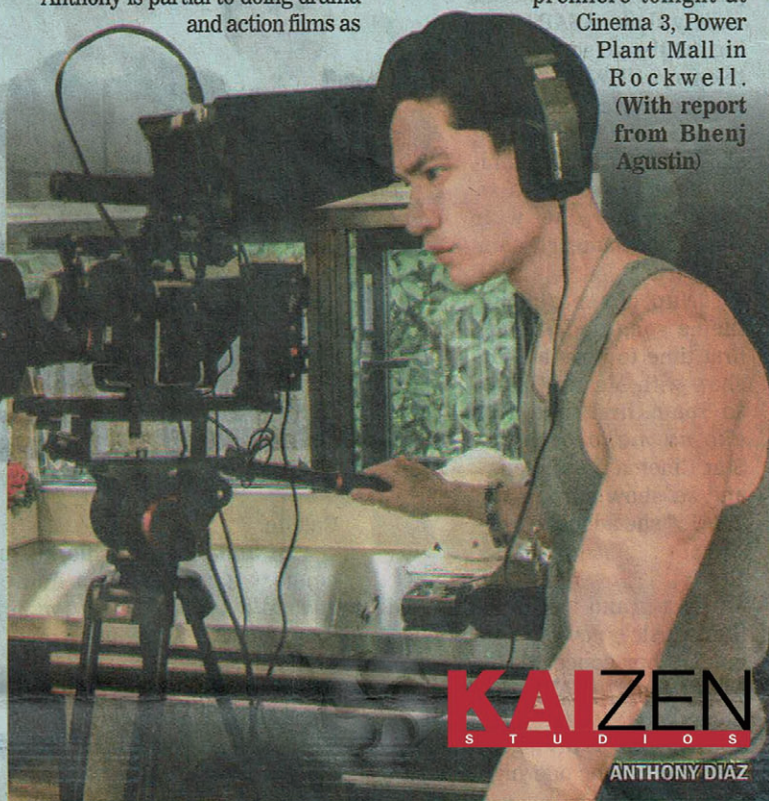
"Ultimately, I want to do movies that make people think. I don't like generic films. I want to play with people's minds. I want to keep them guessing till the end. I like to do things that most won't do. I want to raise questions with my work."

He is just starting his career and Anthony sure is optimistic about everything. But what if it doesn't pan out in the end?

"My father always told me life is a bit unfair. But if there is one lesson I learned that's been proven true, is that if you're gonna dream, dream big because it's free."

"It's amazing how when dreams are put into action, life opens up possibilities."

"Break" will hold its Philippine premiere tonight at Cinema 3, Power Plant Mall in Rockwell. (With report from Bhenj Agustin)



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ANTHONY DIAZ



# FIL-AM DIRECTOR LOOKS FORWARD TO COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ARTISTS

By **Marinel R. Cruz**  
@marinelrcruzINQ

Filipino-American filmmaker Anthony Diaz V, whose "Break" hits local theaters today, says he is looking forward to collaborating with Filipino artists in his next film, which will be shot here next summer.

"I haven't decided yet where the shoot here will be exactly. It will be an action-drama movie similar to the Korean 'Man from Nowhere.' I don't know a lot of Filipino stars but I've heard good words about Liza Soberano and my friend Alvin Anson. Maybe I can jam with them," Diaz tells the Inquirer.

He says it's unfortunate that he has not had the chance yet to see a lot of Filipino films, but Diaz is all praise for Erik Matti's work in the action-drama "On the Job."

"It's awesome! I've seen some local films, but sadly, they offer the same stuff in terms of acting and storyline. The girls are always crying while the men put up this macho facade. The fathers are always the tyrant, and are very brutal. I've seen this



Diaz (right) with lead actress Kaede Ishizuka on the set of "Break"

50 times in a lot of films, both local and foreign. But 'On the Job' showed all these different characters and the acting is very Hollywood, too," Diaz observes.

Diaz wrote, directed, edited and starred in "Break." It started out as a 10-minute short film called "Lunch Break" that he made when he was 17 while living in Las Vegas.

"Break" is about a young man who grew up on the ghetto side of California but is forced to live in Japan with his Japanese father after his American mother dies of cancer. "My character's father falls into depression and he can-

not take care of him anymore. He becomes a rebel. In a place like Japan where everyone is so strict about following tradition, this young man from the ghettos is never really able to adapt. There's a culture clash here," Diaz explains. "People are telling my character, 'You have to choose one over the other. Are you a Japanese or an American? You can't be both.' He feels alone. He tries to reach out to anyone. But in Japan, if you don't speak their language, they simply shake their head and walk away from you."

Diaz then recalls the challenges he had to hurdle during filming. "You can't do guerrilla shoots in Japan. The police will turn you away. You have to plan three months in advance if you would be needing a lockdown on a busy street, for example. On that day, if it rains, or snows, or if there's too much traffic noise, you have to decide to either just make do with what you have, or reapply and wait for another three months. It was fun but challenging. It made me a better filmmaker in terms of how to get around and use my creativity to my advantage."

Diaz says he hopes the Fil-

ipino audience will relate to the movie despite it being shot elsewhere. "When I showed it at a private screening in Japan, I was scared that the Japanese would hate it, or that it would scare them so much because its something that they don't often see or experience there. The reception was surprisingly way better than what I expected. I am hoping that my being a Filipino trying to show different cultures to my *kabayayan* will resonate, especially with the younger generation," he points out.

Diaz hopes "Break" will be chosen to compete at the next Sundance International Film Festival. "We are waiting for the announcement in December," he says of his chance to make it to the prestigious film event. "This is my first submission, but I've attended the festival several times, years ago. The event is the perfect place to meet new people I can learn a lot from. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other film festival in the world. So if you are accepted into Sundance, it's the closest to hitting a home run." INQ



Anthony Diaz V

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21

## A Well-Deserved Break for Anthony Diaz



Once in a super moon, a movie would come along and catch you offguard. Just when you thought you had it all figured out based on the trailer, Break, the movie, suddenly throws a curve ball and makes you grab the nearest tissue box. But wait, I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's go back a few days before.

A few days earlier, we had a supermoon phenomenon that people were talking about.

This has nothing to do at all with the movie but I thought it would be a good place to start being an unusual occurrence. Similarly, the movie that we were fortunate to watch days after had an usual kind of feel as well. I say this in a pleasing way.

Being female, I am less inclined towards movies that are about fighting, killing, or destruction. For some reason, that was my first impression of the movie Break by Anthony Diaz V as I viewed the trailer. I felt that it may not be my type at all but like all movie reviewers, we must give every movie a chance to share its story.



The movie began with a light moment as the gang met up. The dialogue which went back and forth from English to Japanese was interesting especially knowing earlier that the Japanese actors did not speak English and Anthony did not speak Japanese.

Both groups had to learn each other's language but the style worked as the conversation felt natural, even impressive. I thought the dialogue with interchanging subtitles was cool and innovative and weaved its way naturally in the story. Unusual but ok. Hearing Japanese and English accents combined and interchanged had a sort of pleasant harmony to the ears.



Peering into the dark alleys of Japan and tackling cultural flaws of conservative Japanese will always be a curious thing. It was a surprise to learn that the Japanese actors in this film offered their services pro-bono because they believed in the movie's message.

Clearly, the younger generation of Japanese would like bad habits of the past to change to be more open to foreign interaction and integration. Another pleasant unusualness.

The movie serves as a voice of hope for the future by the next generation as explained by the Producers, Anthony Diaz IV and Lani Dizon of Kaizen productions. (Video interview with the producers on behind the scenes below)

Discrimination and acceptance of foreigners, which is the movie's theme, applies to a general audience as well. Written, directed, and portrayed by a 26-year old Anthony Diaz V (or T-boy to his family and friends), Break began as a short film that got positive feedback. The theme is this generation's issue and applies to other parts of the world as well.

Aside from good dialogue, the production value is another plus with great photographic scenes enhanced by great lighting. Great shots, great lighting, great acting especially towards the climax. The three main friends of Johnny and Johnny's father delivered with honors until the end. Even the extras did not disappoint. Poignant, unforgettable lines for me included Asa saying, "please don't let my father be right," or Johnny saying "I didn't realize how much I still need you now" to his father.

Character development for the lead needs a bit more tweaking perhaps as I am just missing a stronger motivation for the action (as well as the drastic mood swings).

Though Anthony's character was appealing in general, I was disconnected from him briefly at that moment of decision. It could have been an editing flaw as I heard the post-production difficulty of cutting the time in half from 4 hours to 2, perhaps editing out essential links in the process.



Anthony has reached so far in such a young age. This movie is an achievement worthy of praise and attention. The scenes were expertly framed with a photographer's eyes and the dialogue gets a thumbs up. Everyone deserves to see this Break.

# Anthony Diaz V's "Break" is the First Hollywood Style Movie Shot in Japan

NOVEMBER 23, 2016

NAZAMEL TABARES

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***Break***, written and directed by Anthony Diaz V who is also the lead star of his full feature film he called his passion project. It is a story of a young Japanese-America man who crosses the line with the underworld element in Tokyo, while dealing with his own personal struggle of being an outsider trying to fit in with the Japanese society. The story is told with the backdrop of the American and Japanese Hip-Hop & Rap scene.



This movie caters to a Global Audience while being the first Hollywood-style movie that was shot in Japan, with Japanese actors speaking in both English and Japanese.



At the young age of 15, Anthony Diaz V discovered his love for film and has since completed dozens of short films. This has given him a broad range of hands on experience through screen writing, directing, producing, acting and editing his own short films. His passion for film-making led him to enroll at the University of Las Vegas Film School, USA (UNLV) where many famous movie directors and producers have taught.



In 2012, Anthony started a film production company called Kaizen Studios in Las Vegas, Nevada USA. In 2013, he also established Kaizen Studios Co., Ltd. in the Shibuya District in the heart of Tokyo, Japan. Now, he completed an independent Hollywood movie titled **"Break"** in which he, wrote, directed and acted where he uses Japan as a backdrop. He is currently in pre-production for his next film to be produced in Tokyo and is also playing the lead actor in an upcoming Gorio Vicuna film titled **"Stations of the Cross"** with Filipino actor Alvin Anson. Anthony Diaz V has been visiting Japan each year since the age of 8, which has greatly influenced his journey in the world of film.



His film **"Break"** hopes to get the recognition from film festivals around the world before its plan of a commercial release next year.

# Fil-Am director discusses alienation in film

By [Jerry Donato](#) (The Philippine Star) | Updated November 20, 2016 - 12:00am



In *Break*, director Anthony Diaz V is also the central character, facing domestic issues and adjusting to a new culture

MANILA, Philippines - Fil-Am Anthony Diaz V shared his first full-length film *Break* with his *kababayan* in a screening held yesterday at the Power Plant Mall Cinema 3. The film is the culmination of his creative narrative as young auteur — and the first step to bigger platforms like the Sundance Film Festival, founded by Robert Redford. Anthony has submitted *Break* to the festival.

"I've always been passionate with film since I was a little kid," recalled Anthony during an intimate group interview with select members of print media. "I would always have movie nights with my family or with my father... I was always interested in and wondering (about) the characters' motivation and what they are in stories."

That enthusiasm didn't translate into an earlier foray into filmmaking, exploring its nitty-gritty. Anthony was sidetracked to theater.

"In theater, I was a big acting geek. I got bitten by the acting bug. I started out as an actor growing up. But then as I got older, around 12 to 13 years old, my dad bought me my first little cheap camera. That's when I started creating stories by myself with my brothers and sisters and other family members. Then that's when I started venturing out behind the camera."



From being part of the stage ensemble, Anthony jumped over to the other side, so to speak, to be in charge of his film's *mise en scene* — carefully crafting its look and tone.

"Shooting behind the camera is actually a lot of fun, like I can control the way I want my characters and the story's motivation to flow. So that's when I started becoming more versed in acting and directing."

According to Anthony, most of his works are narratives,

"Nothing, no documentary work like that." He is showing his A-game as a narrator of a "moving fiction" but based on facts that he must have observed as an American adult and as a sojourner abroad.

"This is actually my first full-length feature," said Anthony. "I've done a lot of short films in college and high school and middle school... I do stories that are very controversial. I like to do stories that actually people are afraid to tell. That's my type of mantra."

So far, the themes Anthony has explored range from racism to inequality ("Poor people vs. rich people"). In *Break*, Anthony shared, "It's the Japanese mindset of thinking that they are supposedly the superior race in terms of culture and lifestyle as compared to others. They think their society is a perfect society. For example in *Break*, I came here (in Japan) thinking I wanna show the ghetto side. I wanna show people that every culture or

every country to go to has a ghetto side. And I wanted to bring that to the forefront. Because everybody that sees Japan, it's always about cherry blossoms, kimonos... But I really like to raise questions in my stories. I really like to make people think when they leave the theater. Whether it is good or bad or they hated it, I want them to really think about what they just saw."

As a director, Anthony said he feels that "I have a unique voice to be heard because I grew up in California and in some rough neighborhood of California and (I've been) traveling ever since I was a young kid with my father all over Asia. I've gotten to experience to see some parts of the world that not many people, even the young generation, have seen before. So I feel like I can be a voice for many different countries, for many different themes, for other people."

*Break* started out as short film titled *Lunch Break* that Anthony made when he was 17 with friends in Las Vegas.

"It was just a short film... I just decided to change the story a little bit, add some American flavor to it and mix that with Japanese culture, change dialogues and add some characters and make it a bit a grand story. The challenge with that was the language barrier. The language barrier was very hard. Nobody spoke English. With the (Japanese) actors, I had to train them to speak English. And I had to learn Japanese for my lines."

Another "roadblock" Anthony had to hurdle was the fact that guerilla shooting is not allowed in Japan. However, his hard work paid off since Anthony's film got an awesome reception from the Japanese who attended the private screening.

Like his influence Mel Gibson, Anthony starred in *Break* and he wrote, directed, edited and produced it.

"I'm the central character," he said. "(He) is half-Japanese, half-American young boy. My mother is American. My father is Japanese. She is getting sick and dying of cancer. So we decide to move to Japan in order to seek better treatment for my mother. And sadly, my mother succumbs to cancer and dies. So, my father falls into depression. He can't take care of me anymore and I've become more rebel."

The struggles of his character do not end there. There's the immediate community he is facing head-on. "So, my character has never learned the language, never adapted to the culture because he was born in America. In Japan, everything is so strict and straight. You have to bow, you have to say thank you, please. My ghetto side from America is interfering with the lifestyle of Japan. There's a culture clash there. The people are telling my character, 'You have to choose one or the other. Are you Japanese or are you American? You can't be both. Which one are you?' There is a big intercultural dimension."

The feelings of loneliness and alienation (which are part of the internal struggles of Anthony's character) and the family drama make the film relatable to places like the Philippines, whose people value family ties and have their own tales of diaspora in finding greener pastures.

Aside from Mel, whose visual style impresses Anthony, the filmmaker likes the works of Ben Affleck and Robert Rodriguez. "(While I was growing and up to this day, my influence) is Robert Rodriguez because of what he did in the independent movie



scene, especially during the '90s," he said. "(What I have learned from him is) you don't have to have a lot of money to make films. You use your creativity to get through your problems whether you have no money or no actors. It's gonna force you to become a better artist and I really take that to heart. Ben Affleck has really a good eye for visual storytelling, especially with acting." Anthony added that even though moviegoers don't see it on screen, he thinks Ben knows how to give actors motivation.

After the Philippine screening of *Break*, Anthony will star in a film and do another one, which will be shot in Asia.



Behind the camera: Anthony considers Mel Gibson, Ben Affleck and Robert Rodriguez his influences. 'I really like to raise questions in my stories. I really like people to think when they leave the theater.'

## Movies Philippines

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2016 / ACTION / MOVIES / THRILLER

## Meet Anthony Diaz V: Fall for a new kind of Screen Hero in “Break”

OCTOBER 22, 2016OCTOBER 22, 2016

NAZAMEL TABARES

Who would have imagined how far a China-made digital 4MB SD card palm camera could take a young dreamer’s film making dreams?

In the case of Filipino-American actor-director-producer Anthony Diaz V, it is quite far indeed. “When I was a kid, my family had movie night every Friday,” Anthony recalls. “After every film, I would ask my parents, ‘What motivated the characters’ actions?’”





That sort of set Anthony off on an early film education with his father encouraging his then ten-year-old son to lap up with glee movies like “The Godfather,” “Taxi Driver,” “Reservoir Dogs,” “Pulp Fiction,” “El Mariachi,” “The Shawshank Redemption,” the list goes on. These are films that Anthony admits “many kids my age at the time wouldn’t be interested in.”

He was, in a manner of speaking, a normal kid whose growing love for films made him a misfit.

Before he was 20, the brawny Anthony Diaz has completed dozens of short films. The independent film making spirit has been evident early on with Anthony multitasking, taking on screen writing, directing, producing, acting, and editing duties. By the time he reached 20, he has already graduated with high honors at the University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV), making him the youngest graduate in the history of the program.

Anthony has received acclaim for the early short films he made like “Delusion” and “Forgotten Heroes.” In 2012, he put up a film production company called Kaizen Studios in Las Vegas, USA. The following year, he established a satellite of Kaizen Studios in Shibuya, Japan. Japan is close to Anthony’s heart, having been a frequent visitor to the land of sashimis, cherry blossoms, and top-tier car brands since he was 8. Little wonder then that when he embarked on his first full length feature, Anthony chose to make “Break.”



“Break” can be described in many ways depending on how the viewer sees it but at its core, it is a story about alienation and angst as a young Japanese-American lad is thrown into the underworld while he deals with personal issues as an outsider trying to fit into Japanese society.

It is, in a way, a throwback to Anthony’s childhood when he was watching movies that wouldn’t strike a chord with children his age. He was like a misfit then, as his character in “Break” is. There is a need to find his place in an environment that isn’t very welcoming. Then he loses the girl he loves and the downward spiral begins.

On screen and in photos, Anthony Diaz strikes you as a kind of millennial James Dean, but this time a rebel with a cause, and with a more relatable Liam Neeson-ish vibe. In the movie “Break,” he even does breakdancing in one scene. Clearly, Anthony is the new kind of screen hero who has a good head to match the well-toned physique. And somehow you sense that there is a tenderness that lies beneath the swagger and the action star gait.

But Anthony assures that the similarities between him and his movie character end there. “The movie is not autobiographical at all,” he points out. “Break,” according to him, “was actually inspired from a short film I made when I was 17 years old called ‘Lunch Break’ which I shot with my high school friends in Vegas. The premise of the story is similar, but I expanded the universe and characters against the backdrop of Japan.”

Why should Pinoy audiences not miss “Break?” “This film is really unique as it blends American storytelling with Japanese cinema infused with hip-hop. It’s the first time to my knowledge that a film has simultaneous English and Japanese language throughout the movie with supporting subtitles. But most importantly, the overall theme is of a foreigner trying desperately to fit in. It is what most of us have experienced in some form or another.”

“Break” has had a private screening in Japan last April and its second stop is the Philippines before it heads off to Sundance.

To find out more about “Break,” go to [thebreakmovie.com](http://thebreakmovie.com/) (<http://thebreakmovie.com/>) or visit the Kaizen Studios FB page @Facebook.com/KaizenStudios

2016, ACTION, ANTHONY DIAZ V, BREAK, MOVIES, THRILLER



Home Filipinos, meet Anthony Diaz V: Fall for a new kind of screen hero in “Break”

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# Filipinos, meet Anthony Diaz V: Fall for a new kind of screen hero in “Break”

By: eduy

October 16, 2016

Movies

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(<http://orangemagazine.ph>)

## New Generation Actor-Filmmaker Anthony Diaz V Breaks Into International Film Scene With Sundance-Bound “Break”

23 NOV 2016

Fil-American actor-filmmaker **Anthony Diaz V** has seen too many movies, one of those that left such a big impression on him was **“The Passion of the Christ,”** a 2004 American epic drama that primarily covers the final twelve hours of Jesus' life. The film was a controversial hit written and directed by Mel Gibson, an artist and a non-conformist. *“He has a terrific visual style,”* says Anthony whose first full-length feature **“Break,”** a Hollywood style independent movie, is Sundance-bound.

Taking after Gibson and **Ben Affleck**, Anthony also writes, directs, and acts in the projects he produces under **Kaizen Studios**. With the rise of cinematic rebels in Hollywood, Europe, and Asia who are redefining the rules of making movies and tackling subjects that very few would touch, Anthony is a talent to watch for.



At 15, he was already making short films. By the time he was 20, Anthony has graduated with high honors from the **University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV)** with a degree in Film, making him the youngest alumnus with such a distinction. After a couple more short features, one of which dramatizes the effects of the war in Afghanistan to a US military family, Anthony knew he was ready for a full-length film.

He chose to do **“Break”** which was inspired by **“Lunch Break,”** a short Anthony made when he was 17 years old. *“The characters in the short were actually based on each of my friends’ personalities who acted in my film. I took those character traits and gave it to the Japanese actors playing the roles.”* He also transferred the setting to Japan, a country that has always fascinated him. *“When I was younger, I used to travel with my father a lot, Japan in particular,”* shares Anthony. *“I always remember falling in love with the lifestyle and the culture because it was all new and fresh to me. As I got older and fell in love with cinema, naturally you want to move into making a feature film.”*



Japan was his obvious choice of a locale. Portraying the Japanese ghetto scene, Anthony proceeded to blend American storytelling with Japanese cinema and infuse it with the elements of hip-hop. He changed some dialogue from English to Japanese, hired Japanese actors and thought that he was good to go. The actual filming proved otherwise. *"It was not easy. I had a Japanese translator on the set and having to communicate through him with the actors was really tough. It cuts into a lot of production time."*

Guerilla shoots are also not allowed in Japan. *"We have to lock down a location one day ahead of time. On top of that, you only get a certain number of hours to shoot in that location. If it rains, you've no choice but to apply for another permit (to shoot)."*

But Anthony persevered through it all even when what was supposed to be a three-week shoot stretched on. Because that is, after all, the essence of making movies. From its inception, cinema is meant to beguile. It weaves magic no matter the apparatus with which you create it. Advances in technology have taken over but a great film at its very core does what it is supposed to do take audiences to a rollercoaster ride, surprise them, baffle them in the same manner that the creator, the filmmaker experiences the same vicarious journey, that of continuously being surprised and falling deeper into loving the art of making movies.

The story of a Japanese-American youth named Johnny, confused and rebelling against circumstance and the norms, **"Break"** is more than worth a peek. It is thrilling and yet dramatic, intense and introspective in turns. *"Acting and directing at the same time, it's a natural process for me. Being in front of the camera and being behind it is all a natural process for me,"* says **Anthony Diaz V**, cinema craftsman at heart.

He is out to conquer, leave a mark, and pave the way upon which next generation Anthony Diazes 15 to 20 years from now will tread. *"If there is one lesson I learned and have proven to myself, it's 'If you're gonna dream, dream big because it's free.' It's amazing how when dreams are put into action, life opens up the possibilities."*

**"Break"** also stars **Namihiko Oomura**, **Kaede Ishizuka**, **Tohru Watanabe**, Japanese rapper **Ish-One** and American rapper **Crazy T**. **Diaz's** film was received warmly, with a jam packed crowd composed of fans and friends in the Philippine entertainment industry, who all watched the private screening the **Power Plant Mall's Cinema 3** held last November 19, 2016.

Prior to the private screening, a press conference in Mamou was feted for Diaz and his team, which was attended by reporters from the major TV networks, entertainment writers and bloggers.

To these, **Anthony Diaz V** gratefully enthused, *"Thank you Philippines for all the love! You all are so great and thank you for making the premiere of BREAK in Manila an experience I will never forget! I will cherish this memory forever! Thank you for being such great fans! More great stories and films are coming soon from Kaizen Studios and I can't wait to share it with all of you again! Stay tuned! From the bottom of my heart, thank you so much "*



## Fil-Am director looks forward to collaborating with local artists

By: **Marinel R. Cruz** - Reporter / [@InqEnt](#)

Philippine Daily Inquirer / 02:20 AM November 19, 2016



Diaz (right) with lead actress Kaede Ishizuka on the set of “Break”

Filipino-American filmmaker Anthony Diaz V, whose “Break” hits [local](#) theaters today, says he is looking forward to collaborating with Filipino artists in his next film, which will be shot here next summer.

“I haven’t decided yet where the shoot here will be exactly. It will be an action-drama movie similar to the Korean ‘Man from Nowhere.’ I don’t know a lot of Filipino stars but I’ve heard good words about Liza Soberano and my friend Alvin Anson. Maybe I can jam with them,” Diaz tells the Inquirer.

He says it’s unfortunate that he has not had the chance yet to see a lot of Filipino films, but Diaz is all praise for Erik Matti’s work in the action-drama “On the Job.”

“It’s awesome! I’ve seen some local films, but sadly, they offer the same stuff in terms of acting and storyline. The girls are always crying while the men put up this macho facade. The fathers are always the tyrant, and are very brutal. I’ve seen this 50 times in a lot of films, both local and foreign. But ‘On the Job’ showed all these different characters and the acting is very Hollywood, too,” Diaz observes.

Diaz wrote, directed, edited and starred in “Break.” It started out as a 10-minute short film called “Lunch Break” that he made when he was 17 while living in Las Vegas.

“Break” is about a young man who grew up on the ghetto side of California but is forced to live in Japan with his Japanese father after his American mother dies of cancer. “My character’s father falls into depression and he cannot take care of him anymore. He becomes a rebel. In a place like Japan where everyone is so strict about following tradition, this young man from the ghettos is never really able to adapt. There’s a culture clash here,” Diaz explains. “People are telling my character, ‘You have to choose one over the other. Are you a Japanese or an American? You can’t be both.’ He feels alone. He tries to reach out to anyone. But in Japan, if you don’t speak their language, they simply shake their head and walk away from you.”

Diaz then recalls the challenges he had to hurdle during filming. “You can’t do guerrilla shoots in Japan. The police will turn you away. You have to plan three months in advance if you would be needing a lockdown on a busy street, for example. On that day, if it rains, or snows, or if there’s too much traffic noise, you have to decide to either just make do with what you have, or reapply and wait for another three months. It was fun but challenging. It made me a better filmmaker in terms of how to get around and use my creativity to my advantage.”



Diaz says he hopes the Filipino audience will relate to the movie despite it being shot elsewhere. “When I showed it at a private screening in Japan, I was scared that the Japanese would hate it, or that it would scare them so much because it’s something that they don’t often see or experience there. The reception was surprisingly way better than what I expected. I am hoping that my being a Filipino trying to show different cultures to my kababayan will resonate, especially with the younger generation,” he points out.

Diaz hopes “Break” will be chosen to compete at the next Sundance International Film Festival. “We are waiting for the announcement in December,” he says of his chance to make it to the prestigious film event. “This is my first submission, but I’ve attended the festival several times, years ago. The event is the perfect place to meet new people I can learn a lot from. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other film festival in the world. So if you are accepted into Sundance, it’s the closest to hitting a home run.”



# Fil-Am filmmaker breaks into Sundance fest

STAR CIRCUIT By Ricky Calderon (The Freeman) | Updated November 23, 2016 - 12:00am



Anthony Diaz V (right) with 'BREAK' lead actress Kaede Ishizuka

Filipino-American filmmaker Anthony Diaz V is set to break out with "BREAK," his Sundance-bound full-length feature film debut as writer-director-actor.

"Sundance is the most prestigious film festival in the world," says Anthony, "if your goal is for your film to get global recognition. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other international film festival. So if you are accepted into Sundance, it's the closest to you hitting a home run."

It bears mentioning that Sundance was the brainchild of a talented Hollywood actor and director, Robert Redford, who won an Oscar for helming "Ordinary People." Anthony longs to be in that exclusive circle which also counts as members two directors that he looks up to.

"The first major influence was Robert Rodriguez. The movement he created in the indie movie scene was amazing at that time. He proved that it wasn't impossible to make a movie if you had the desire and the creativity and quite frankly the ignorance of not knowing it can't be done. My recent favorite is Ben Affleck ('Argo' and 'Gone Girl') who writes, directs and acts in the projects he produces."



Filmmaking is a tedious process, the end results of which are always most rewarding. In most cases, a film's genesis begins with the spark of an idea; what follows after is a whole new different story. "BREAK," says Anthony, was a breeze to write. It took him two months, on and off, to finish the movie's draft. "What really took time was dialing it in with the details," he said.

"BREAK" is a first-of-its-kind Hollywood style movie shot entirely in Japan with Japanese actors speaking both English and Japanese. That naturally posed a problem.

"Honestly, the biggest challenge was the language barrier, where things could get lost in translation. It took six months in language and intonation prep before we started to roll the cameras. Also, trying to give my guidance as a director to the actors through a translator sometimes made me want to pull my hair out. It was physically and emotionally exhausting at times. But I would never trade the experience for anything."

Now, one must understand where Anthony is coming from. This was a kid who always had a crazy imagination and was raised watching gritty and perplexing classics like "The Godfather," "Taxi Driver," "Reservoir Dogs," "Pulp Fiction," "El Mariachi," and "The Shawshank Redemption" to name a few.

"Sometimes I would act like a character from a film after just watching it and be on that for a week straight before moving onto the next character of a movie," shared Anthony.

On the side, he also did normal things kids his age engaged in like video games and sports. But movies have always played a major role in Anthony's life from his childhood up until he went to the University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV). He graduated with high honors with a Bachelors Degree in Film at age 20, making him the youngest graduate in the program's history.

His passion for film guided him as he embarked on his earliest short films that include "Delusion" which was showcased at the UNLV Film Festival and "Forgotten Heroes," a film about the effects of the war in Afghanistan to a US military family. "Forgotten Heroes" earned rave reception and has played at various movie festivals. It is also under consideration to be showcased at Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

With "BREAK," Anthony feels that it is the perfect vehicle for his full-length feature debut. Mixing elements of crime, drama, love story and action, Anthony stars and directs from a script which he also wrote under his own production company called Kaizen Studios.

With his gym-honed physique, killer smile, arresting screen presence, and seductive alto, Anthony slips into the role of Johnny easily like he was born to play it. Johnny is a Japanese-American young man who gets involved with the underworld elements in Tokyo while dealing with the weight of being an outsider trying to fit into Japanese society. The film's technical aspects are polished and the storytelling is gripping, managing to draw us into this alienated young man's world and psyche.

"BREAK" has had a successful private screening in Tokyo with over 500 people this April. Don't miss "BREAK" when it hits Manila on November 19th which is its second stop in Asia before the film goes to Sundance and its lead actor and director emerges as a future film maverick.

To find out more about "BREAK," go to [thebreakmovie.com](http://thebreakmovie.com) or visit the Kaizen Studios FB page @Facebook.com/KaizenStudios.

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Robin Padilla received two advance gifts for his 47th birthday today. First was the birth of his daughter Maria Isabella who was born on Monday, November 14, in the United States.

Second was his being granted by President Rodrigo Duterte absolute pardon in connection with his illegal possession of firearms case for which he was convicted in 1994. The absolute pardon restores his civil and political rights, meaning he can now vote. More importantly, he can now travel to other countries.

Robin would have wanted to be with his wife Mariel Padilla when she gave birth to their daughter but his application for a US visa was denied, mainly because of him being convicted for the illegal possession of firearms case. Now that he has been

given absolute pardon, Robin is looking forward to finally being issued a visa by the US embassy so he can visit Mariel and his daughter in the US.

In a press conference held Wednesday, Robin's lawyer disclosed that through the initiative of Betchay Vidanes (the action star's manager), he filed a petition at the Bureau of Pardons that he be recommended for pardon. They went through the process needed to secure the pardon. There was no palakasan, no pulling of strings just to speed up the process. Robin would not want it that way because he didn't want people to think he got the pardon because he campaigned for the President.

Robin didn't know that his lawyer filed such a petition and was surprised to read the news item that his name was included among those being recommended to be granted executive clemency by President Duterte. The actor is very thankful for this blessing and is looking forward to finally flying to the US (if he is granted a visa) to visit Mariel and their baby.

Happy birthday Robin!

\*\*\*

The movie "Working Beks" from Viva Entertainment opens today in cinemas nationwide. This is the latest movie from award-winning writer-director Chris Martinez. Featured here in gay roles are John Lapus, Edgar Allan Guzman, TJ Trinidad, Joey Paras and Prince Stefan.

"Working Beks" is a story of different kinds of gays and according to Direk Chris, many gays will be able to relate to the characters portrayed by his talented cast.

John plays Gorgeous who is the breadwinner of his family. TJ plays an executive in a marketing firm who is up for promotion. Edgar Allan is a matinee idol who is a closet gay and is involved in a sex video scandal. Joey is a former gay who is getting married but had a change of heart after watching the sex scandal of EA. Prince plays a promiscuous call center agent battling his worries after learning a sex partner tested positive for HIV.

Their stories intertwine in this film that is Direk Chris' tribute to the LGBT community. On the same day, the characters will face different situations that will change their lives forever.

"Working Beks" is rated B by the Cinema Evaluation Board.



# Fil-Am Filmmaker-Actor Anthony Diaz V, Gets a Break!

Glitter Pixie    November 2, 2016    Movies

Inspired from a short film he made when he was only 17, entitled *Lunch Break*, where he shot with the help of his high school friends in Las Vegas, Fil-Am filmmaker/producer/actor Anthony Diaz V reveals that his Sundance hopeful film *Break*, was given a modified treatment, like expanded storyline and added more interesting characters, against the backdrop of Japan.



According to Diaz, *Break* can be described in many ways depending on how the viewer sees it but at its core, it is a story about alienation and angst as a young Japanese-American lad is thrown into the underworld while he deals with personal issues as an outsider trying to fit into Japanese society.

Japan is close to Anthony's heart, having been a frequent visitor to the land of sashimis, cherry blossoms, and top-tier car brands since he was eight. Little wonder then that when he embarked on his first full-length feature, Anthony chose to make *Break*.

As a child, Anthony had his early film education with his father. At age 10, he was encouraged to watch movie greats like, *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction*, *El Mariachi*, *The Shawshank Redemption*, and the list goes on. These were films Anthony admits, “*many kids my age at the time wouldn’t be interested in.*” He was, in a manner of speaking, a normal kid whose growing love for films made him a misfit.



As a teenager, the brawny Diaz has completed dozens of short films. The independent film making spirit has been evident early on with the young artist, taking on screen writing, directing, producing, acting, and editing duties. By the time he reached 20, he has already graduated with high honors at the University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV), making him the youngest graduate in the history of the program.

Anthony has received acclaim for the early short films he made like *Delusion* and *Forgotten Heroes*. In 2012, he put up a film production company called Kaizen Studios in Las Vegas, USA. The following year, he established a satellite of Kaizen Studios in Shibuya, Japan.

It is, in a way, a throwback to Anthony’s childhood when he was watching movies that wouldn’t strike a chord with children his age. He was like a misfit then, as his character in *Break*. There is a need to find his place in an environment that isn’t very welcoming. Then he loses the girl he loves and the downward spiral begins.

On screen and in photos, Anthony Diaz strikes you as a kind of millennial James Dean, but this time a rebel with a cause, and with a more relatable Liam Neeson-ish vibe. In *Break*, he even does breakdancing in one scene. Clearly, he’s the new kind of screen hero who has a good head to match the well-toned physique. And somehow you sense that there is a tenderness that lies beneath the swagger and the action star gait.

Why should *Pinoy* audiences not miss *Break*? “*This film is really unique as it blends American storytelling with Japanese cinema infused with hip-hop. It’s the first time to my knowledge that a film has simultaneous English and Japanese language throughout the movie with supporting subtitles. But most importantly, the overall theme is of a foreigner trying desperately to fit in. It is what most of us have experienced in some form or another,*” he tells.

*Break* has had a private screening in Japan last April and its second stop is the Philippines before it heads off to Sundance.



## Filipinos, Meet Anthony Diaz V: Fall For a New Kind Of Screen Hero In "Break"

17 OCT 2016

Who would have imagined how far a China-made digital 4MB SD card palm camera could take a young dreamer's film making dreams?

In the case of Filipino-American actor-director-producer **Anthony Diaz V**, it is quite far indeed. *"When I was a kid, my family had movie night every Friday,"* Anthony recalls. *"After every film, I would ask my parents, 'What motivated the characters' actions?'"*

That sort of set Anthony off on an early film education with his father encouraging his then ten-year-old son to lap up with glee movies like **"The Godfather," "Taxi Driver," "Reservoir Dogs," "Pulp Fiction," "El Mariachi," "The Shawshank Redemption,"** the list goes on. These are films that Anthony admits *"many kids my age at the time wouldn't be interested in."*

He was, in a manner of speaking, a normal kid whose growing love for films made him a misfit.

Before he was 20, the brawny **Anthony Diaz** has completed dozens of short films. The independent film making spirit has been evident early on with Anthony multitasking, taking on screen writing, directing, producing, acting, and editing duties. By the time he reached 20, he has already graduated with high honors at the **University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV)**, making him the youngest graduate in the history of the program.

Japan is close to Anthony's heart, having been a frequent visitor to the land of sashimis, cherry blossoms, and top-tier car brands since he was 8. Little wonder then that when he embarked on his first full length feature, Anthony chose to make **"Break."**

**"Break"** can be described in many ways depending on how the viewer sees it but at its core, it is a story about alienation and angst as a young Japanese-American lad is thrown into the underworld while he deals with personal issues as an outsider trying to fit into Japanese society.

It is, in a way, a throwback to Anthony's childhood when he was watching movies that wouldn't strike a chord with children his age. He was like a misfit then, as his character in **"Break"** is. There is a need to find his place in an environment that isn't very welcoming. Then he loses the girl he loves and the downward spiral begins.

On screen and in photos, **Anthony Diaz** strikes you as a kind of millennial **James Dean**, but this time a rebel with a cause, and with a more relatable **Liam Neeson-ish** vibe. In the movie **"Break,"** he even does breakdancing in one scene. Clearly, Anthony is the new kind of screen hero who has a good head to match the well-toned physique. And somehow you sense that there is a tenderness that lies beneath the swagger and the action star gait.

But Anthony assures that the similarities between him and his movie character end there. *"The movie is not autobiographical at all,"* he points out. **"Break,"** according to him, *"was actually inspired from a short film I made when I was 17 years old called 'Lunch Break' which I shot with my high school friends in Vegas. The premise of the story is similar, but I expanded the universe and characters against the backdrop of Japan."*

Why should Pinoy audiences not miss **"Break?"** *"This film is really unique as it blends American storytelling with Japanese cinema infused with hip-hop. It's the first time to my knowledge that a film has simultaneous English and Japanese language throughout the movie with supporting subtitles. But most importantly, the overall theme is of a foreigner trying desperately to fit in. It is what most of us have experienced in some form or another."*

**"Break"** has had a private screening in Japan last April and its second stop is the Philippines before it heads off to **Sundance**.



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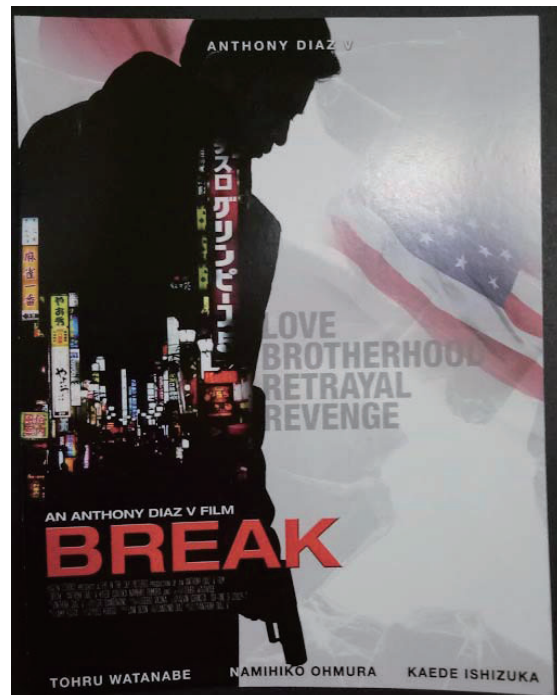
**"Delusion"** and **"Forgotten Heroes."** In 2012, he put up a film production company called **Kaizen Studios** in Las Vegas, USA. The following year, he established a satellite of **Kaizen Studios** in Shibuya, Japan.

**KAIZEN Studios presents Fil-Am Director Anthony Diaz V film :  
“BREAK” ( crime, drama, love story and action film )**



KAIZEN STUDIOS presents “BREAK” a crime, drama, love story and action film written and directed by **Anthony Diaz V**, who is also the lead star of this full feature film.

“BREAK” is a story of a young Japanese-American man who crosses the line with the underworld element in Tokyo, while dealing with his own personal struggle of being an outsider trying to fit in with Japanese society. The story is told with the backdrop of the American and Japanese Hip-Hop & Rap scene.



The 1st Hollywood style movie that was shot in Japan, with Japanese actors speaking both English & Japanese throughout the film, “BREAK” movie caters to a **Global Audience**.

“BREAK” starring Anthony Diaz V, Namihiko Oomura, Kaede Ishizuka & Tohru Watanabe. Japanese rapper Ish-One and American rapper Crazy-T infuse hip-hop into the movie soundtrack and are also showcased in the film.

**Anthony Diaz V** discovered his love for film and has since completed dozens of short films starting from the young age of 15. This has given him a broad range of hands on experience through screen writing, directing, producing, acting and editing his own short films.

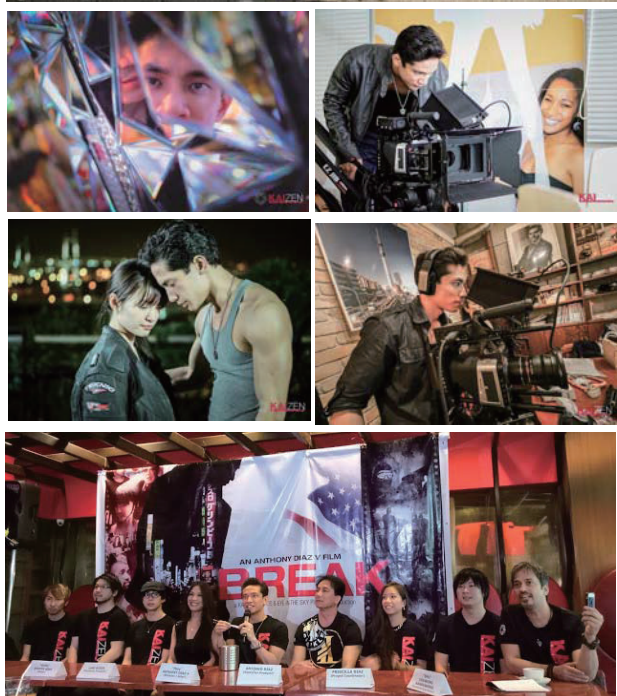


*“BREAK” press conference on Saturday, November 19, 2016, Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati, Philippines*

His passion for film-making led him to enroll at the University of Las Vegas Film School, USA (UNLV) where many famous movie directors and producers have taught. He graduated with high honors with a Bachelor Degree in Film in the year 2010 at the age of 20 making him the youngest graduate in the history of the program.

Anthony wrote, directed and acted in a short film called “Delusion” which was specially showcased at the UNLV Film Festival. The next film he wrote, directed and acted in is called “Forgotten Heroes.” This film is about the war in Afghanistan and how it affects a U.S. military family. It received rave reviews and has played at various movie festivals and is under consideration to be showcased at Capitol Hill in Washington D.C.

In 2012, Anthony started a film production company called Kaizen Studios in Las Vegas, Nevada USA. In 2013, he also established Kaizen Studios Co., Ltd. in the Shibuya District in the heart of Tokyo, Japan. He recently completed an Independent Hollywood movie, called “BREAK” in which he wrote, directed and acted in which uses Japan as a backdrop. He is currently in Pre-Production for his next film to be produced in Tokyo and is also playing the Lead Actor in an upcoming Gorio Vicuna Film. Anthony Diaz V has been visiting Japan each year since the age of 8, which has greatly influenced his journey in the world of film.







*"When I was a kid, my family had movie night every Friday. After every film I would ask my parents..."what motivated the characters actions?" At age 8 my dad let me watch The Godfather, Taxi Driver, Reservoir Dogs, Pulp Fiction, El Mariachi, The Shawshank Redemption etc. Films that many kids my age at the time wouldn't be interested in. Also, for as long as I can remember, I along with my brother and sisters would always re-enact movie scenes and quoted movie lines everywhere we went," shared Anthony Diaz V regarding his journey in films.*

*"I always wanted to be an actor first and was in school plays since I was 5 years old, in Kindergarten. I thought that actors were the extent of the "movies." Not realizing till later on that there was a whole process behind what we see on screen. So when I became aware of the process, thats when I asked my dad for a camera and he gave me a cheap China made digital 4MB SD card palm camera," said T-Boy, as Anthony is called.*

*"BREAK" was actually inspired from a short film I made when I was 17 years old called "Lunch Break" which I shot with my high school friends in Vegas. The premise of the story is similar, but I expanded the universe and characters against the backdrop of Japan.*

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Anthony (T-Boy) hopes **"Break"** will be chosen to compete at the next **Sundance International Film Festival**.

*"We are waiting for the announcement in December. This is my first submission, but I've attended the festival several times, years ago. The event is the perfect place to meet new people I can learn a lot from. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other film festival in the world. So if you are accepted into Sundance, it's the closest to hitting a home run."*

Catch "Break" at the nearest theaters nationwide.

For more info and updates, visit Anthony DiazV [Info@kaizenstudios.com](mailto:Info@kaizenstudios.com) [Facebook.com/anthonydiazv](https://www.facebook.com/anthonydiazv) [www.thebreakmovie.com](http://www.thebreakmovie.com) and <https://www.facebook.com/myrns.roman/videos/10209196441641125/>



# Anthony Diaz set to break into Sundance

Written by **Edgar Cruz** | Saturday, 05 November 2016 00:00



*Sundance is the most prestigious film festival in the world,” says Filipino-American filmmaker Anthony Diaz V, who is set to break out with Break, his Sundance-bound, full-length feature film debut as writer-director-actor. If your goal is for your film to get global recognition, hit for Sundance. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other international film festival. If accepted into Sundance, it’s the closest to you hitting a home run.*



Break hits Manila on November 19, which is its second stop in Asia before the film goes to Sundance and emerge as its future film maverick. Break had a successful private screening in Tokyo with over 500 people last April.

“If your goal is for your film to get global recognition, hit for Sundance. Also, most film buyers and distributors attend Sundance more than any other international film festival. If accepted into Sundance, it’s the closest to you hitting a home run,” Anthony explains.

Movies have always played a major role in Anthony’s life, from his childhood to his years at the University of Las Vegas Film School (UNLV). He graduated with high honors with a Bachelor’s Degree in Film at age 20, making him the youngest graduate in the program’s history.

His passion for film guided him as he embarked on his earliest short films that include Delusion, which was showcased at the UNLV Film Festival, and Forgotten Heroes, a film about the effects of the war in Afghanistan to a US military family. Forgotten Heroes was warmly received and has played at various movie festivals. It is being considered for a showing at Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

“My first major influence was Robert Rodriguez,” Anthony identifies that exclusive circle, which also counts as members two directors. The other helmer he looks up to is Hollywood actor and director Robert Redford, who won an Oscar for helming Ordinary People and the maverick who signaled Sundance.

“The movement he created in the indie movie scene was amazing at that time. He proved that it wasn’t impossible to make a movie if you had the desire and the creativity and, quite frankly, the ignorance of not knowing it can’t be done. My recent favorite is Ben Affleck (Argo & Gone Girl) who writes, directs and acts in the project’s he produces,” he adds.

Filmmaking is a tedious process whose end results are always most rewarding. In most cases, a film’s genesis begins with the spark of an idea; what follows after is a whole new different story. Break, says Anthony, was a breeze to write. It took him two months, on and off, to finish the movie’s draft. “What really took time was dialing it in with the details.”

Break is a first-of-its-kind Hollywood style movie shot entirely in Japan with Japanese actors speaking both English and Japanese. That naturally posed a problem.

“Honestly, the biggest challenge was the language barrier, where things could get lost in translation,”



he explains. "It took six months in language and intonation prep before we started to roll cameras. Also, trying to give my guidance as a director to the actors through a translator sometimes made me want to pull my hair out. It was physically and emotionally exhausting at times, but I would never trade the experience for anything."

Anthony, as a kid, always had a crazy imagination and was raised watching gritty and perplexing classics like *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *Pulp Fiction*, *El Mariachi* and *The Shawshank Redemption*, to name a few.

Invariably, he would act like a character from a film after just watching it and be on that for a week straight before moving on to the next character of a movie. On the side, he also did normal things kids his age engaged in like video games and sports.

Anthony feels that *Break* is the perfect vehicle for his full-length feature debut. Mixing elements of crime, drama, love story and action, Anthony stars and directs from a script he also wrote under his own production company called Kaizen Studios. With his gym-honed physique, killer smile, arresting screen presence and seductive alto, Anthony slips into the lead role of Johnny with ease.

Johnny is a young Japanese-American who gets involved with Tokyo's underworld elements as he deals with the weight of being an outsider trying to fit into Japanese society. With Kaede as lead actress, the film's storytelling is gripping and technical aspects are polished, managing to draw one into this alienated young man's world and outsider psyche.

Go to [thebreakmovie.com](http://thebreakmovie.com) or visit the Kaizen Studios FB page @[Facebook.com/KaizenStudios](https://www.facebook.com/KaizenStudios) to find out more about "Break."

**ANSWER THE HIV SURVEY.** The University of the Philippines Manila in collaboration with researchers from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine of United Kingdom was awarded a research grant after a rigid competition to improve the effectiveness of HIV Testing and Counseling (HTC) in the Philippines.

It will pilot an innovative tool in the form of a "serious gaming" application available for both Android and iOS operating system to increase the number of MSMs getting tested and knowing their HIV status.

The increasing number of HIV/AIDS cases in the Philippines is becoming an alarming public health dilemma with almost 25 new cases diagnosed every day. According to observation by the Department of Health, high risk groups, especially Men having Sex with Men (MSM), tend not to come forward for testing, and the two-week time period between testing and diagnosis in the current system leads to few returns for treatment and care.

This is an important contributing factor to the Philippines having the fastest growing HIV epidemic in the world. There is a clear need to address delays the current diagnosis system and pilot targeted interventions to improve uptake of HIV testing and counselling services among high risk groups.

"The prevalence is going up... hopefully through this we can increase the testing through gaming," Dr. Emmanuel Baja, principal investigator of the project, says in an interview.

The project is also supported by the HIV/STI Prevention Program of the Department of Health under the leadership of Dr. Jose Gerard Belimac.

The game will make use of information gathered from the series of interviews conducted and accomplishment of survey questionnaires. To the gays and transgenders who would want to participate in the survey, there will be a link available in social networking sites like Planet Romeo, Grindr at Growlr that will redirect you to the survey platform.

All information captured from the survey will be treated as confidential thus it is highly encouraged to answer the survey with utmost honesty.

Again, the LGBT community is encouraged to support this cause.