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Jaguar

(FILIPINO-COLOR)

Variety

Cannes, May 14.

Atienza release and production. Features entire cast. Directed by Lino Brocka. Screenplay, Jose Lacaba, Richardo Lee; camera (Color), Conrado Balthazar; editor, Rene Tala; music, Max Jocson. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fest (Competing).

May 13. '80. Running time 90 MINS.

Poldo Phillip Salvador
Cristy Amy Austria
Sonny Menggie Cobarrubias
Mother Anita Linda
Direk Johnny Delgado
Jing Tonio Gutierrez

Lino Brocka is the one Filipino director known outside his country. His "Insiang" captured attention in the non-competing Director Fortnight at the Cannes Festival last year and now he is in competition for the first time this year with "Jaguar." It is also the first Filipino film ever to compete at Cannes.

While "Insiang" stayed within the poor ghetto of Manila, and was a

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tale of mother and daughter rivalry, here Brocka deals with a young man who wants out of the poverty he was born to. But he is a victim of a shady rich man who uses and then discards him.

The film has an icy rage that reflects on the effects of poverty and overcomes the obvious shoe-string budget problems. There is a probable influence of the classic American gangster and so-called black films of people trapped by their environment but well assimilated to life in the Philippines today.

"Jaguar" is the slang name for a security guard. The hero, Phillip Salvador, works guarding a high class apartment house. He supports his mother and two sisters and keeps put of trouble with local gangs where he lives.

One night he helps a rich tenant attacked by an irate shady night club owner and his henchmen. Jaguar subdues them all and finds a job with the man he helped as his guard and helper. The man is rich and publishes raunchy magazines, comic books and fashion mags.

His boss and former attacker are at odds again over a girl. The girl is hidden and guarded by the Jaguar. Though she is the boss's girl, love grows into a well made love scene.

Another fight makes Jaguar a killer and he is hunted down and captured. The rich man promises to help him and his family if he does not mention his name.

Jaguar's restrained rage, his try for a decent life frustrated by corruption and moral shabbiness, has him running amok as he almost kills the man before he is subdued by the police. He is now a criminal.

The script is workmanlike and acting acceptable. The feeling for the poor quarter, the lack of outlets and the film's concern lift it above just another social thriller.

Film was refused for export but allowed to be shown at Cannes when the festival insisted on it. Its Cannes showing may help it get released from its export ban at home. More a playoff item, film shows a forceful director in Brocka, with an insight into social forces which could lead to more potent films with more important budgets. --Mosk.