



# REMITTANCE

A PATRICK DALY & JOEL FENDELMAN FILM

Finding Freedom In Servitude.



GREEN MACHINE FILMS PRESENTS 'REMITTANCE' ANGELA BAROTIA PAOLO O'HARA OLIVE NIETO  
 PREM JOHN WILLIAM LEDBETTER PRODUCTION DESIGNER IMRAN JAVED KHAN MUSIC BY GIL TALMI EDITED BY JON HAMMOND  
 DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY TAN TECK ZEE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER DAN GERARD BRIAN NEWMAN PRODUCED BY FRANK HALL GREEN PREMA MENON  
 WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY PATRICK DALY & JOEL FENDELMAN

RemittanceFilm.com



# OVERVIEW

When Marie takes a job as a maid in Singapore to support her family in the Philippines, she trades one set of hardships for another. When her husband back home abandons her family, she needs to choose between her personal aspirations and her family responsibilities.

**Remittance** is the second narrative feature from the writer/director team Patrick Daly and Joel Fendelman. Based upon an original script by Daly and Fendelman, *Remittance* combines gripping drama with an appreciation for the nuances of everyday life, embracing real locations, and casting non-actors to present an honest, open and authentic look into the lives of low-wage migrant workers in Singapore. *Remittance* follows Marie, a Filipina domestic worker who struggles to cope with demanding employers, long hours of work, and separation from her family. Breaking from the conventional image of maids as exploited labor, the story explores the transformations Marie goes through as a woman dealing with conflicting obligations and aspirations.



# SYNOPSIS

Financial problems send Marie from the poverty of the rural Philippines to the opulence of hyper-modern Singapore, where she finds work with a wealthy expatriate family as a maid. Her days are spent cooking, cleaning and caring for five year old Jack - an exhausting schedule that is compounded by the challenges of adjusting to a new environment and living away from her family for the first time. She has to grind it out to support her family and pay her daughter's college tuition.



Marie's life becomes more bearable when she falls in with a group of more experienced maids who show her the ropes and introduce her to the world of Singapore's low paid migrant workers. She spends her off days with her new friends, enjoying a taste of freedom, and getting involved in activities offered by an NGO at her church. Everything is upended when she is told by her employer that her first 8 months of salary is being withheld to pay the employment agency that arranged the job - a bill she was not anticipating. With tuition bills piling up and constant pressures to send more money to her family, Marie is forced to sneak out at night to work as a hostess in a karaoke bar, entertaining men and fending off their sexual advances.

Marie learns how to compartmentalize her life - shifting between maid, mother and bar-girl, as she stoically works to care for her Employer's family. Her triumph at finally paying off her debt is stolen when her daughter Rosa tells her that Edwardo, her husband is seeing another woman in the Philippines and misusing the money she is sending home. Frustrated and hurt, Marie cuts him off and puts her daughter Rosa in charge of the family finances. Emboldened, Marie confronts her husband and tells him that she is moving on.



Motivated to carve out an independent life, Marie makes plans to open a small hair salon when she eventually returns to the Philippines so she can support her family without Edwardo. Between work, late nights at the bar, and taking classes in small business management on her days off, she grows increasingly distant from her family – who only reach out when they need money.



With her relationship to her family reduced to sending monthly payments, Marie slips fully into life in Singapore. Edwardo tries to apologize and repair their relationship but Marie is not longer receptive. Instead she starts dating Jamal, a Bangladeshi construction worker. All of her plans are disrupted when Rosa calls and says that she is pregnant. Driven by guilt and reminded of why she came to Singapore in the first place, Marie breaks her contract and goes back home.

Back in the Philippines Marie is pressured by her family to return to Edwardo. Determined to make it

on her own, Marie refuses and takes steps to set up a hair salon. She finds that the person she has become in Singapore does not fit neatly back into her home community, and struggles to set up her business. Edwardo tries to convince Marie to come home, but she refuses. Rebuffed, Edwardo steals the money she saved from Singapore. When confronted, Edwardo tells her that he used it to fix their taxi and demands that she move back in. After a tense confrontation she takes her kids to her mother's house. Her dream dead and with Rosa's baby on the way, Marie is forced to turn what was going to be a salon into a low end makeshift laundry mat. One day while delivering laundry to customers, Marie passes the maid agency and wonders about going abroad to work.



# BEHIND THE SCENES

We initially thought about Remittance as a documentary set in Singapore focusing upon the difficult conditions that low wage migrant workers face, as well as the challenges of maintaining connections with their families and lives back home. We interviewed hundreds of women and men from across Asia working as maids, bar girls, waitresses, construction workers and sailors.

The more we learned about the world they have created for themselves in Singapore, the more it became apparent we were only seeing part of the story. We heard so many horrible stories about abuse, long hours, disrespect and failing families back home, and so were stunned by the amount of women who wanted to stay in Singapore, in spite of those conditions. This led to a major shift in focus as we began to explore why – how bad could life be at home and what did life in Singapore have to offer that we were not seeing?



We found for many of the women working as maids the answer was freedom, or at least a form of it. Hundreds of thousands of women from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka work in Singapore – and they would not be there if they had better opportunities at home. In some cases women are trying to create better economic opportunities for their families – often remitting most of their wages to support their entire extended families. For other women it was a refuge from domestic abuse and broken relationships – migration being a socially preferable option to divorce. In just about all cases, their lives back home were highly prescribed by the values of their often conservative communities and the weight of family expectations. Many of the women with children of their own were married in their teens – and being a woman in the developing world is often a 24/7 job, with no wages, hard work and little thanks. One maid told us that she never had a day off until she started working in Singapore.



As we developed the project and decided to switch to a narrative film, we focused on the lives that these women carve out for themselves in their limited free time, and how they are able to create moments of freedom while toiling in servitude. We spent months hanging out with them every Sunday, which is usually their one day off a week: picnicking, going shopping and tagging along on dates. In the process we discovered a totally different side of Singapore – one that most Singaporeans and the more affluent expatriates know little about.



This is not just a Singapore story, but a global story of the commodification of labor, and the exportation of mothers from poor third world countries to first world nations. Singapore is a microcosm of what is happening across the globe – it could be LA, Rome, Dubai, New York, London, etc. Our aim is not to judge but to use a compelling and human story to problematize the effects of globalization, and in particular to focus on domestic workers as women, not labor. As storytellers we have a very anthropological approach. Our process involves spending time in the various communities, developing relationships that allow for access to worlds not usually shown to outsiders. We are interested in telling the less obvious story and celebrating the drama of everyday life.

We wanted to firmly ground the film within the real world that low-wage migrants inhabit and ensure that those women and men were central to the story telling. Almost the entire cast of the film are non-professional actors, with many of the roles played by migrant workers, including the lead role of Marie. Over the course of a year, we held weekly script development workshops with groups of domestic workers on Sundays to distill out the essence of their collective experience, and populate the film with 'real' moments. With a micro-budget (obtained largely through crowd-funding), we shot for 24 days in Singapore and 6 days in the Philippines between July and October 2013. To enhance production value, we made extensive use of real locations, often embedding our cast within ongoing moments (such as the Singapore National Day Parade) to better contextualize their environments and bring the audience into unfamiliar spaces. The film is shot doc-style, in part to immerse the viewer within the lived experience of the migrant worker community, and in part to not distract from the realistic nature of the story.



# DIRECTORS

**Patrick Daly** is a trained anthropologist and environmental scientist, with a PhD. from the University of Oxford. He splits his time between teaching and academic research at the National University of Singapore and independent filmmaking. He has written, directed and produced a number of award winning documentary and narrative films that have played at film festivals around the world.

**Joel Fendelman** comes from a film background and has worked ten years in the Film industry in New York city producing content for companies such as A&E, PBS, American Express, Ovation TV, Allure. MTV. His films have shown around the world at prestigious festivals such as Cannes, Chicago, Miami. He has lectured about Independent filmmaking at various film festivals and is currently pursuing an MFA in Film at the University of Texas.

Together Joel and Patrick have been able to harness their skills to create a unique and complimentary collaboration. They have developed an ethno-narrative style of filmmaking that has been widely lauded for its unique perspective and handling of real locations and non-actors. Their work focuses upon socially important issue and has touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Patrick and Joel began working together in 2005 on the feature documentary *Needle Through Brick* about the degradation of

traditional culture in modern Asia that was filmed on location in Malaysian Borneo. The film won the Silver Palm award at the Mexico International Film festival, screened at the Museum of Moving Image in NYC, has been seen by over a million people online, and has been released as a DVD and video on demand. They partnered again in 2009 to make the award winning short *Daud*. *Daud* screened at festivals around the world and won the Kathryn Tucker Windham Award for storytelling. Building off the success of *Daud*, they wrote and directed their debut feature narrative *David* in 2011. *David* has screened at over 70 festivals worldwide, and won numerous prizes including the prestigious Ecumenical Prize at the Montreal World Film Festival, the Audience Award at the Brooklyn Film festival, Best feature at the San Luis Obispo film festival and was honored with Special mention at the Religion Today film festival in Italy. Critically acclaimed, *David* is currently being distributed internationally by Ruth Diskin Films.



# PRODUCERS

## BRIAN NEWMAN

### *Executive Producer*

Brian is the producer of *Love & Taxes* a narrative feature in post from Jake and Josh Kornbluth; and executive producer of *Shored Up*, a documentary feature by Ben Kalina and *Remittance*, a feature narrative from Patrick Daly and Joel Fendelman.

Previously, Brian served as CEO of the Tribeca Film Institute (TFI), where he conceived and launched the Reframe project, a ground-breaking initiative in partnership with Amazon to aggregate, curate, digitize and disseminate as DVD and digital download and streaming over 1,000 hard-to-find films and videos to educational institutions, museums, galleries, and the general public. Brian developed all concepts for the accompanying website ([www.reframecollection.org](http://www.reframecollection.org)) which used open source cataloguing, social networking, curation and new web tools to help consumers, curators and educators to find, use and interact with film content.

Brian serves on the board of Muse Film & Television and is chair of the board of Rooftop Films, and was an officer of the board of Grantmakers in Film & Electronic Media (GFEM) for five years.

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## FRANK HALL GREEN

### *Producer*

Frank Hall Green is a writer/director and producer and partner at Catch & Release Films. His directorial debut feature *WILDLIKE* played over 150 festivals, won over 80 festival awards and opened in theaters in September 2015. Heralded in many reviews, *WILDLIKE* is rated 100% on Rotten Tomatoes. Produced by Christine Vachon/Killer Films, Tandem Pictures and Joseph Stephans, it is filmed on 35mm in Alaska, and stars Ella Purnell, Bruce Greenwood, Brian Geraghty, Nolan Gerard Funk and Ann Dowd. Frank runs the development fund and production company Catch & Release Films with producer/partner Tom Heller (*FOXCATCHER*, *PRECIOUS*, *127 HOURS*, *MUD*) in New York. Frank is currently a producer on the adaptation of *BOY21* by Matthew Quick (*SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK*). Frank recently produced *REMITTANCE*, the sophomore feature of writing/directing team Joel Fendelman and Patrick Daly (*DAVID*). In prior years, Frank produced *GHETTO KLOWN* for HBO starring John Leguizamo, *ALLEGIANCE* starring Aiden Quinn, *Bow Wow*, Seth Gabel and Pablo Schreiber and *1-900- TONIGHT* starring John Turturro among other titles. Frank cut his teeth producing far too many short films and has an MBA from NYU's Tisch School of Film & Television. Before NYU's Graduate Film Program, Frank worked in Venture Capital and emerging technology. He is also an alumnus of NYU's Gallatin School, an avid backpacker and a member of MENSA.



# PREMA MENON

## *Producer*

Prema started off in films as an Assistant Director in the South Indian film industry, after which she returned to Singapore to freelance in various roles. Between 2008 to 2012, she ran her own production outfit, producing video content for corporate and government clients, as well focusing on independent films. She's directed 2 of her own short films, and produced films for other independent filmmakers. Remittance is her 2nd feature project. Currently Prema works as a Production Manager in an American media company overseeing the production of food and lifestyle content for its cable TV channels across Asia.

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# JENNIFER D'ANGELO KIRCHER

## *Co-Producer*

Jennifer is a veteran of feature film production in the United States. She worked primarily as an Assistant Director on more than a dozen films including Payback, Conspiracy Theory and Ransom, along with a significant run in episodic television. She got her start in the business by fetching coffee for Bill Murray on Groundhog Day and working as a PA on Bronx Tale and Carlito's Way. Jen holds a Bachelor of Science in Film from Northwestern University and is a graduate of the DGA's Trainee Program. Jen took a hiatus from production to raise her four young children, but is happy to be involved with a project as meaningful as Remittance. Living in Asia for the past nine years, she feels strongly that this story needs to be told. She is one of the only members on the crew without a Twitter account, and can be found in Florida shuttling her kids to their sports in her mini-van.

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# ALLAN NICHOLS

## *Co-Producer*

Associate producer Allan F. Nicholls is a BAFTA and WGA award nominated veteran of the movie industry having produced, directed, acted and written music for the past forty years.

Often doing multiple roles for a film, his experiences include associate producer and assistant director on Oscar nominated Dead Man Walking (1995), assistant director on the Oscar nominated The Player (1992), executive producer and assistant director for the Palme d'Or nominated Cradle Will Rock (1999), and associate producer on the Golden Globe nominated Bob Roberts (1992). His television experience includes, amongst others, being an associate director on Saturday Night Live (1989-90) and first assistant director on Tanner on Tanner (2004). He wrote A Perfect Couple (1979) and the BAFTA nominated A Wedding (1978), both directed by Robert Altman. He has also taught screenwriting at such places as Tisch School of the Arts in Asia.

To Allan's credit too is a five-year Broadway career in several rock musicals including Hair and Jesus Christ Superstar. He also starred in such films as Nashville (1975), Slap Shot (1977), and Popeye (1980).

# CREDITS

*Written and Directed and Produced*  
**Patrick Daly and Joel Fendelman**

*Produced by*  
**Frank Hall Green**

*Produced by*  
**Prema Menon**

*Executive Produced By*  
**Brian Newman & Dan Gerard**

*Cinematography by*  
**Tan Teck Zee**

*Edited by*  
**Jon Hammond**

*Original Music by*  
**Gil Talmi**

*Co-produced by*  
**Allan Nicholls & Jennifer Kircher**

*Associate Produced by*  
**Gwyneth Teo, Charles Leary, Michael Daly**

*Audio Post Production Services provided by: Parabolic*  
**Lewis Goldstein**

## Cast

**Angela Barotia**  
**Paolo O'Hara**  
**Prem John**  
**Olive Nieto**  
**William John Ledbetter**  
**Yolanda Bermas**  
**Michelle Flores**  
**Venife B. Cadilo**  
**Marilyn Q. Baraceros**  
**Rosita M. Sanchez**  
**Emeline F. Egaran**  
**Mary Delias**  
**Jack Ezra Daly**

**Marie**  
**Edwardo**  
**Jamal**  
**Bernice**  
**Ian**  
**Amie**  
**Rosa**  
**Fe**  
**Marilyn**  
**Marigold**  
**Melissa**  
**Marie's Mother**  
**Jack**



# CONTACT

- *Writer/Director:* Patrick Daly - [ptd123@gmail.com](mailto:ptd123@gmail.com)
- *Writer/Director:* Joel Fendelman - [joel.fendelman@gmail.com](mailto:joel.fendelman@gmail.com)
- *Executive Producer:* Brian Newman - [brian@sub-genre.com](mailto:brian@sub-genre.com)
- *Producer:* Frank Hall Green - [fhg@greenmachinefilm.com](mailto:fhg@greenmachinefilm.com)

Remittance Trailer: [Vimeo.com/127614256](https://vimeo.com/127614256)

[www.remittancefilm.com](http://www.remittancefilm.com)