Republic of the Philippines  
House of Representatives  
Quezon City, Metro Manila  

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS  
Second Regular Session  

House Resolution No. 1431  

INTRODUCED BY  
REP. ALFRED VARGAS  

A RESOLUTION  
RECOMMENDING TO THE CULTURAL CENTER OF THE PHILIPPINES  
AND THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS THE  
CONFERMENT OF THE NATIONAL ARTIST AWARD TO MR. RICARDO  
ARREOLA LEE, POPULARLY KNOWN AS “RICKY LEE”  

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricardo Arreola Lee, more popularly known as “Ricky Lee”, is the most awarded Filipino scriptwriter, with more than 80 trophies, from award-giving bodies such as the Filipino Academy of Movie Arts and Sciences (FAMAS) Awards, Metro Manila Film Festival (MMFF), Cinema One, Film Academy of the Philippines, Gawad Urian, Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC) Star Awards for Television, Pampelikulang Samahan ng mga Dalubguro (PASADO), among many others;  

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricky Lee has received numerous lifetime achievement awards from different award-giving bodies and institutions, namely:  

a. One of the 100 Centennial Honors for the Arts, Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1998;  
b. Cinemanila International Film Festival Life Achievement Award, 2000;  
c. Gawad Pambansang Alagad ni Balagtas, Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas, 2000;  
d. Natatanging Gawad Urian Life Achievement Award, 2003;  
e. ICON Lifetime Achievement Award. UP Film Institute, 2008;  
f. Ulirang Alagad ng Pelikula sa Likod ng Kamera, PMPC, 2014;  
g. UP Gawad Plaridel for Film, 2015;  
h. Gawad CCP para sa Sining (Panitikan), 2015;  
i. Gawad Direk, 2015;  
j. Iconic Media Personalities for Film and Television Award, ALTA Media Icon Awards, University of Perpetual Help System DALTA, 2015;
k. Lifetime Achievement Award in Scriptwriting, International Film Festival Manhattan (IFFM), 2016;
l. Lifetime Achievement Award, Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP) Film Ambassadors Night, 2017;
m. Ani ng Dangal, National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), 2017;
n. WOW (Walk on Water), ABS-CBN, 2018;
o. Gawad Dangal ni Balagtas, Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) 2018;
p. Gawad Cinemalente, ICCT Colleges, 2018;
q. Apolinario Mabini Achievement Award, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, 2018;
r. Hall of Fame – Best Screenplay, Metro Manila Film Festival, 2019;
s. Camera Obscura Artistic Excellence Award, FDCP, 2020;
t. Gawad Laurel, Lyceum of the Philippines University, 2020;

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricky Lee has written more than 170 screenplays, three novels, five plays, and the first Filipino scripting manual (Trip to Quiapo) that is now used as a textbook, among others since 1973, spanning over forty excellent years of his literary career earning him major literary awards, namely:

a. Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature – Short Story, First Prize – “H’wag, H’wag Mong Kukuwentuhan ang Batang si Wei-Fung”, 1969;
b. Pilipino Free Press – First and Third Prize, Annual Literary Awards – “H’wag, H’wag Mong Kukuwentuhan ang Batang si Wei-Fung” and “Pagtatapos”, 1969;
c. Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature – Short Story, First Prize – “Servando Magdamag”, 1970;
e. Gawad Balagtas, Surian ng Wikang Pambansa for Outstanding Contribution to Literature and Cinema, 1983;
f. Gawad ng Quezon City, Outstanding Citizen of Quezon City in the Field of Film and Literature, 1995;
g. Gawad Balagtas, Unyon ng mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas (UMPIL), 2000;
h. Dr. Jose P. Rizal Awards for Excellence – for Arts and Culture, 2002;
i. Natatanging Gawad ng Sining at Kultura, Ateneo de Manila University, 2005;
j. National Book Awards, Manila Critics Circle Special Prize for a Book Published by an Independent Publisher – “Si Amapola sa 65 na Kabanata”, 2012;

WHEREAS, his notable contributions on television has been recognized by multiple awards, namely:

d. Best Drama Series, Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC) – “Sa Piling Mo”, ABS-CBN, 2006;
e. Best Drama Series, PMPC – “Lobo”, ABS-CBN, 2008;
g. Most Well-Liked TV Program – Anak-TV Seal Awards – “Lobo”, ABS-CBN, 2008;
h. Best Telenovela Program, Banff World Television Festival (Toronto, Canada) – “Lobo”, ABS-CBN, 2008;
i. Best Telenovela International Award, NCCA – “Lobo”, ABS-CBN, 2008;

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricky Lee has written numerous screenplays for films that have garnered awards both locally and internationally, and were shown both in and out of competition at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival, Berlin Film Festival, and other film festivals in Toronto, Cairo, Fukuoka, Tokyo, San Sebastian, Hawaii, Singapore, New York, and many others;

WHEREAS, his exemplary screenplays for film has been well-recognized with “Lucia” (1992), produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, and won in the Best Film category at the 1992 London Environmental Film Festival, while “Himala” (1982) won the Viewer’s Choice Award for the Best Film of All Time from the Asia-Pacific Region in the 2008 CNN Asia Pacific Screen Awards;


WHEREAS, the succeeding years after his debut feature, his name was attached to sterling performances that gave actors not just awards but a grand slam of awards: Vilma Santos for “Relasyon” (1982), Lorna Tolentino for “Narito ang Puso Ko” (1992), Elizabeth Oropesa for “Bulaklak ng Manila” (1999), Glydel Mercado for “Sidhi” (1999), not to mention awards won by Nora Aunor for “Andrea, Paano ba ang Maging Isang Ina?” (1990) and “Ang Totoong Buhay ni Pacita M.” (1991), Jaclyn Jose for “Private Show” (1985), and many more;

WHEREAS, at an era when directors were given the sole imprint on a film and superstars provided the marquee value, Ricky Lee’s foray into films that resulted in works that resonated and impacted the mass audience
paved the way for scriptwriters to have a face when there used to be none or just a hazy image at best;

WHEREAS, his works are pioneering in content and technique, tackling relevant themes of gender, overseas Filipino workers, the Filipino-Chinese community, and other relevant and social issues that remain important to the country today;

WHEREAS, his works gave his name a brand that connotes artistic excellence and box office power. “Jaguar” was the first Filipino film in competition at Cannes Film Festival, “Himala” competed at Berlin, and a number of his films with Marilou Diaz-Abaya competed or were exhibited at various international film festivals. Films he did with directors Mel Chionglo, Joel Lamangan, and Mac Alejandro have competed in festivals in Milan, Rome, Fukuoka, Toronto, and Cairo;

WHEREAS, as recent as August and October of 2020, his film “Kaputol” (“Fragments”) has competed at the Bengaluru International Film Festival in India, the Asian Film Festival in Rome, and won at the Innuendo Film Festival in Milan, Italy. He has transcended genres from action to comedy, to horror, to romance, to drama. He has always shattered ceilings and broken barriers. After forty years in the industry, he has remained essential and relevant to Philippine Cinema;

WHEREAS, at the height of his popularity, he began his legacy of mentorship. In 1982, he started giving workshops for free. This was the time when there was no film school in existence. This unselfish endeavor has been consistent and he has, to date, conducted 27 personal scriptwriting workshops. He has served as mentor to his workshoppers who have invaded the TV and film industries. A great number of his workshoppers have carved a name for themselves and have received local and international recognition for their works, some completed during the workshop. Some names include Lav Diaz, Jeffrey Jeturian, Sari Dalena, Bing Lao, Dwein Baltazar, Rae Red, Paolo Villaluna, and Bianca Balbuena, among many others. He has also conducted workshops for various academic institutions (UP Film Institute and De La Salle-College of St. Benilde), groups (local and foreign like OFW groups in Hong Kong and Dubai), and corporations like ABS-CBN and Star Cinema;

WHEREAS, at the age of 73 years old as of November 2020, he still continues with the workshop despite the pandemic with participants coming from all parts of the world. The number of his workshoppers are now in the thousands, a major creative force and influence. Other than his works in film, broadcast arts, and literature, a great part of his legacy are his workshops;

WHEREAS, he has collaborated with film masters of the 80’s, and is still working with the masters of this generation like Lav Diaz and the future of Philippine cinema like Mikhail Red and Treb Monteras;
WHEREAS, he has nobly served and fought for the plight of his fellow writers through his organization, the Trip to Quiapo Foundation (formerly the Philippine Writers Studio) which aims to provide support to new and struggling writers in the industry;

WHEREAS, his notable works and scriptwriting manuals have been used as educational text for high school and college students in the Philippines, and even abroad with “Salome: A Filipino Film Script” being used as textbook in film courses at the University of Wisconsin-Madison;

WHEREAS, he has also devoted his life to teaching Filipino college students about literature, film, and scriptwriting at the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, University of Santo Tomas, De La Salle University, and New Era University;

WHEREAS, he has remained humble amidst the many recognition that he has received. Mr. Ricky Lee has become a timeless role model for many artists in different fields for his craft, and has served as an inspiration to many Filipinos for his nationalism and contributions to nation-building;

WHEREAS, he is nominated to the Order of National Artist by four respected groups and institutions namely University of the Philippines Film Institute, Directors Guild of the Philippines, Inc. Polytechnic University of the Philippines, and Filipino Screenwriters Guild;

WHEREAS, the film and television industries, aside from the academe and other sectors, clamor for his proclamation as National Artist as evidenced by the written endorsements his nomination has received;

WHEREAS, the extent, impact, and influence of his works extend to the thousands he has mentored through his workshops. Most of the workshopers not only write for the various broadcast networks, film production companies and other content driven platforms but also occupy leadership positions in their respective fields of expertise;

WHEREAS, the Order of National Artist, when granted, is not only a recognition of Ricky Lee but also of all writers who, for many generations, have been invisible not only to the eyes of the public but of the industries that have perpetuated a system that inadvertently sidelined the value of writers. The Order of National Artist will highlight writers as important and equal collaborators;

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricky Lee holds the distinction of being the first in many national and historical achievements, to wit: the first to hold scriptwriting workshops in the Philippines; the first to write a scriptwriting manual, “Trip To Quiapo”; the first to write a book of screenplays, “Brutal / Salome”; the writer of the first Filipino film to compete at the Cannes Film Festival, “Jaguar”; the writer of the first Filipino film to win a Best Picture
award at an A-list International Film Festival, "The Flor Contemplacion Story" at the Cairo International Film Festival; aside from being the most awarded Filipino scriptwriter, the first to receive wide acclaim from the industry to which he belongs and the viewing public in general;

WHEREAS, Mr. Ricky Lee has proven, beyond accolades and awards, his worthiness to be called a National Artist because of his body of works, his ethics, and his virtues;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the House of Representatives, to recommend the conferment of the National Artist Award to Mr. Ricardo Arreola Lee, popularly known as "Ricky Lee".

RESOLVED, FURTHER, That a copy of this Resolution be furnished to the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Adopted,

REP. ALFRED VARGAS
Fifth District, Quezon City