

A professional film set with orange walls and a grey carpet. In the center is a red L-shaped sofa with several orange and black pillows. A red blanket is draped over the ottoman. To the left of the sofa is a white side table with three small potted plants. The room is filled with professional lighting equipment, including several large studio lights on stands, a boom light hanging from the ceiling, and a camera on a dolly. A black office chair is on the left, and a computer monitor on a stand is on the right. The title 'TO KEN WITH LOVE' is overlaid in large, bold, black letters on a white background that looks like a torn piece of paper.

TO KEN WITH LOVE

A short film

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
MIKE TALPLACIDO

The background of the slide is a photograph of a modern lounge. It features a large wall made of a grid of square glass panels. Some panels are backlit with a warm yellow light, while others are backlit with a vibrant red light, creating a colorful, abstract pattern. In the foreground, there are several dark-colored leather sofas and armchairs arranged in a conversational layout. A low wooden coffee table sits in front of the seating. The overall atmosphere is sophisticated and contemporary.

Logline:

A flamboyant talk show host
grapples with the perils of
tokenism in the workplace

Synopsis:

To Ken with Love is a story about Ken Jones, a flamboyant talk show host who relishes being the "whitest gaysian ever" and takes pride in being "the only Asian in the room."

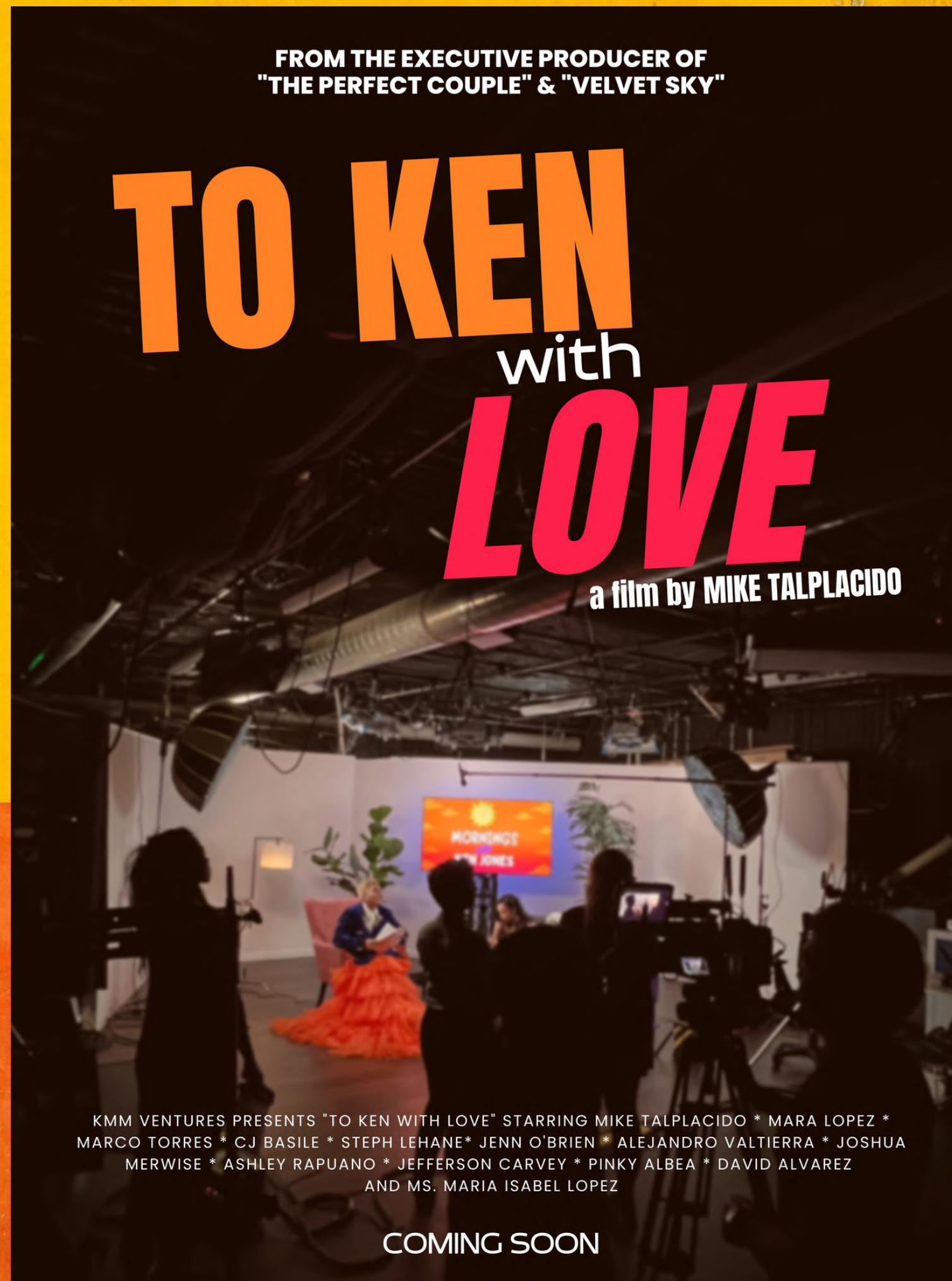
Underneath Ken's colorful persona lies a true case of internalized racism. So, not only does Ken not see himself as Asian, but he also hates it and tries to stay away from it as much as he can, and the one thing that he really wanted is to be accepted and validated by white people.

Ken's perfectly curated world of glitz and glamour is suddenly rocked by a work incident involving his boss Freddy, a network TV executive who calls Ken his "favorite gaysian," and the arrival of a young Filipino-American intern named Marikit, whose presence will play a key role in Ken's journey, and the re-appearance of Ken's mother, whom he had not seen in twenty years.

Soon, Ken must deal with the toxic tokenism at work and carve a path towards embracing his roots and identity. Will Ken find his way back to finding out who he is?

To Ken with Love is a story about family, relationships, and the journey towards finding one's true authentic self.

Movie Poster:



A black and white photograph of Mike Talplacido, a man with short dark hair, smiling and standing with his hands in his pockets. He is wearing a dark, textured sweater and dark trousers. The background of the photo is a modern interior with large windows and contemporary furniture.

MIKE TALPLACIDO

Writer/Director:

PODCAST HOST AND WRITER BASED IN NORTH CAROLINA. HE'S THE AUTHOR OF KISS MY MIKE, A MEMOIR ABOUT NAVIGATING SEXUALITY AND RACIAL IDENTITY, INTERWOVEN WITH THE PURSUIT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM, THE PRESSURES OF A RELIGIOUS FAMILY AND THE ULTIMATE QUEST FOR LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS.

Director's Statement

"To Ken with Love" is my love letter to the Gay Asian community.

It is a story about KEN JONES, a flamboyant talk show host who relishes being the "whitest Gaysian ever" and takes pride in being the only Asian in the room.

I was inspired to tell this story because it is something that I have seen in my own community. I realize much of this phenomenon was really a result of internalized racism. As a Filipino-American and an Asian-American, I have seen so many of us struggle with our own identities. Many of us have felt "not enough" and as such have chosen to stay away from our own identities and culture. Worst, a few others I know have even "hated" themselves for being who they are (myself included at some point in the past).

This story needs to be told NOW. There is such a strong momentum going on for diversity and inclusion. However, while there's been some progress made across the board, there's also still so much more we can do to create change and make a positive impact. It is also important for actions to start from within ourselves. And so, for a lot of Filipino-Americans and Asian-Americans, we must smash every bit of notion related to internalized racism. We must learn to love who we are and embrace our unique beauty.

CAST



KEN

MIKE TALPLACIDO

A flamboyant host of "MORNINGS WITH KEN" talk show, who relishes being the "whitest Gaysian ever"



MARIKIT

MARA LOPEZ

A young, idealistic intern who is struggling with self-confidence and still trying to find her place in the world



EDNA

MARIA ISABEL LOPEZ

A struggling but compassionate mom of Ken usually overshadowed by her domineering husband



BENNY

MARCO TORRES

(A strict father who is set in his own ways

CAST



FREDDY

CJ BASILE

KEN's network executive boss



MIA

STEPH LEHANE

KEN's producer / assistant at his show



KELLY

JENN O'BRIEN

KEN's producer / assistant at his show



NICO

ALEJANDRO VALTIERRA

Male model, Ken's trophy boyfriend

CAST



RACHEL ZELENSKY

ASHLEY RAPUANO

BROADWAY star of KATNISS: THE MUSICAL



MALE PA

Joshua Merwise

Nerdy producer / Ken's assistant



CHEF PINKY

PINKY ALBEA

Celebrity Chef, Guest on Ken's new show



TEENAGE KEN

JEFFERSON CARVEY

Teenage version of KEN

To Ken With Love

A short film



Featuring Costume Pieces From:

KENNETH BARLIS

(Fashion Designer, Project Runway S19 finalist)



Kenneth Barlis

Kenneth is a
Philippines-born,
Filipino fashion
designer who
competed on Season 19
of Project Runaway.

**CHECK OUT KENNETH'S
WORK ON HIS OFFICIAL
INSTAGRAM PAGE:**

@kennethbarlis_official

CONTACT

MIKE TALPLACIDO

mike.talplacido@gmail.com

IG: kissmymike_official