

PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The most-awaited AsiaPOP Comicon Manila 2018 is back

Marvel's Defenders stars *Finn Jones* and *Jessica Henwick* to headline the event

AsiaPOP Comicon Manila 2018 (APCC Manila) unveiled today its first batch of celebrity headliners and guests as part of the fantastic fourth year offering from the biggest and much-awaited pop culture convention in the region that promises a whole new level of geek experience. APCC Manila 2018 is slated to happen from July 27 to 29 at the SMX Convention Center in Pasay City.

“Every year, we promise a bigger and better AsiaPOP Comicon Manila and we will never disappoint our fans who have supported us since year one. We continue to bring unique talent and content to APCC Manila 2018, from superstars to artists who have made indelible impact on the pop culture scene,” said Abdulla Mahmood, Director, Marketing and International Business, Al Ahli Holding Group, during a press briefing held today at the SMX.

“The Universal Events and Entertainment team are in sync with the APCC audience to understand which TV shows, movies, talents, artists, and content resonate well in the region and continuously work to offer them a memorable experience filled with surprises that put Manila on a global pop-culture map with such an event,” added Mahmood.

Leading the first batch of Hollywood actors to grace APCC Manila 2018 is **Finn Jones** who is punching his way into Manila, as the titular character in the popular Marvel series *Iron Fist*, a role he reprised in the Marvel Universe series *Luke Cage* and *The Defenders*. Jones is set to be back for *Iron Fist*'s second season.

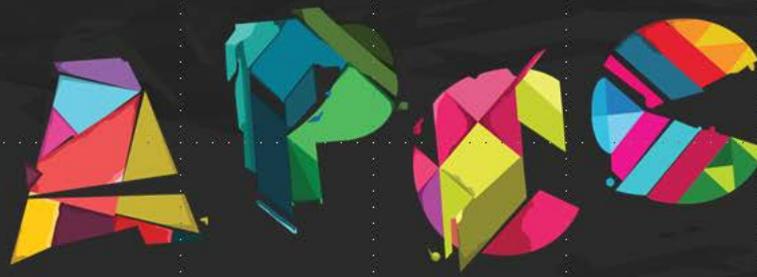
In addition to playing the Defender, Jones is also well-known for his role as the Knight of Flowers, Loras Tyrell, in the sweeping HBO fantasy series *Game of Thrones*.

Jones will be joined by on-screen partner **Jessica Henwick** in leading the APCC Manila 2018 lineup. The English actress, who plays the female lead Colleen Wing in Marvel's *Iron Fist* is also well-known for her role of Nymeria Sand in HBO's hit series *Game of Thrones*. Henwick was also seen in the global blockbuster *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

She is currently filming for the second season of *Iron Fist* and has recently completed 20th Century Fox's *Underwater*, alongside Kristen Stewart and T.J. Miller, which is set to be released later in 2018.

Cosplay Madness

APCC Manila also revealed its initial lineup of Cosplay Authority Global Challenge (The CAGE) judges including **Canvas Cosplay** and **Leon Chiro**. The CAGE, which has Singer Philippines as one of its main sponsors, is the biggest cosplay competition in the region with cash and other prizes worth around \$18,000.



Canvas Cosplay, whose real name is **Philip Odango**, is an award-winning Filipino American costume designer. He is best known for his cosplay of Maui from Disney's *Moana*, which was recognized by Disney's head of animation as "The Real Maui."

Leon Chiro, an award-winning cosplayer from Italy, is well-known for his videogame character cosplays that feature weapons and handmade accessories. Chiro will be making his first appearance in Manila through APCC.

Get Creative with International Artists

Joining the pool of talented and creative artists who will grace APCC Manila 2018 are **Alex Sinclair**, **Lan Medina**, **Mike McKone**, **Phil Noto**, **Brian Muir**, **Whilce Portacio**, and **Simone Legno** who will showcase their talents and works to thousands of pop culture enthusiasts from all over the region.

Mexican comic-book colorist **Alex Sinclair** is best known for his collaborations with comic artists Jim Lee and Scott Williams. He has previously worked on *Astro City*, Alan Moore's *Top 10*, *Harley Quinn*, *Batman: Hush*, *Superman*, and *WildCATs*, among others.

Multi-awarded comic book illustrator **Lan Medina** is the first Filipino artist to win the prestigious Will Eisner Comic Industry Award for his work *Fables* (for Best Serialized Story/Vertigo-DC Comics) and is well-known for his work on Marvel Comics such as *Venom Carnage*, *Cable / Deadpool*, *Silver Surfer*, and the *Punisher*. He is also known for his work on DC Comics that includes his creation of a solo comic book for *MERA*, *Queen of Atlantis*, which is a character from the pages of *Aquaman*.

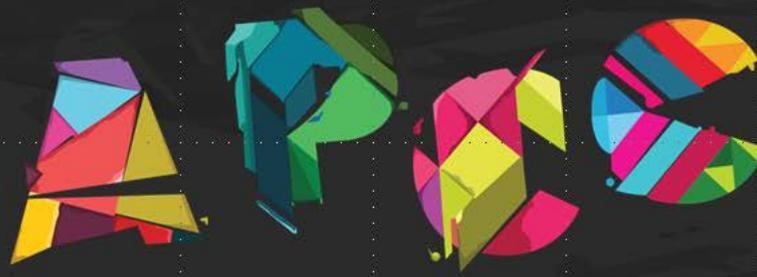
Mike McKone's first published work was for DC Comics' *Justice League of America* and Marvel Comics' *Punisher* series. He has also worked on *Teen Titans*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, and *Fantastic Four*. His recent projects include *Avengers* graphic novel: *Endless Wartime* and *Justice League United*.

American painter and comic book artist **Phil Noto** is known for his works *Jonah Hex*, *X-23*, *Uncanny X-Force*, and *Black Widow*. His work with Gerry Duggan, *The Infinite Horizon*, earned him an Eisner nomination for Best New Series. Noto also had a ten-year stint with Disney as clean-up artist for animated works such as *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, *Lilo & Stitch*, and *Brother Bear*.

As one of the most respected sculptors and a veteran artist in the film industry, **Brian Ian Muir** has been working in film for over 48 years and is best-known for his work on *Star Wars* that led to his well-received autobiography *In the Shadow of Vader*.

Coming back for the fourth time are Filipino-American comic book artist and writer **Whilce Portacio** and the creative director and co-founder of tokidoki, **Simone Legno**.

Portacio has done notable works which include the titles *Uncanny X-men*, *X-Factor*, *The Punisher*, *Heroes Reborn: Iron Man*, *Wetworks* and *Spawn*, among others. Besides being the co-founder of the Image Comics, Portacio is currently working independently for DC and Marvel.



For his part, toy artist **Simone Legno** of Tokidoki is all set to bring the brand's crazy-kawaii cool style to the event. Legno is the world-famous artist and graphic illustrator best known for being one of the brains behind art giant tokidoki, through which he has collaborated with names such as Karl Lagerfeld, LeSportsac, Onitsuka Tiger, Barbie, SEPHORA, Marvel, and Hello Kitty, among others.

More exciting announcements of APCC's partnerships with Marvel, Netflix, and other studios confirmed to return this year are expected to roll out soon, which will definitely pump up the convention's main hall.

APCC Manila 2018 tickets are now available via SM Tickets website, <https://smtickets.com/>, and at all SM Tickets outlets, with ticket prices PhP650 (one-day pass), PhP950 (two-day pass), and PhP1,150 (three-day pass). All these will give the ticketholder access to stage activities, performances, and the main exhibition floor. The event is free for children aged five years and below for all days, but a valid identification is required for verification purposes before entering the show floor.

For more information and event updates, visit asiapopcomicon.com/manila, or follow their official Facebook Page www.fb.com/apccmanila, Twitter account @AsiaPOPComicon, and Instagram account @asiapopcomicon. Official hashtags of APCC Manila 2018 are #APCCPH2018 #AsiaPOPComicon.

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About the Organizers

AsiaPOP Comicon is organised by Universal Events and Entertainment, a Singapore based subsidiary of Al Ahli Holding Group, which is a four-decade old UAE conglomerate that has businesses in over 20 countries that includes live events, entertainment, media, theme park designs, toy collectibles, and retail.