

22nd ifva Animation Category Jury Meeting Transcript

Jury Members: Lo Che Ying (Lo), Welby Chung (Chung), Eddy Hui (Hui), Mandy Tsang (Tsang), Siuhak (Siuhak)

ifva representative: Kattie Fan (Fan)

(Editor's note: Chung joined the meeting at a later time.)

Fan: Today, we will select one Gold, one Silver and one Special Mention winners from the nine finalists. The Special Mention Award winner will not receive any prizes or money but will get a certificate as encouragement. We can discuss the films one by one so that the participants understand what you think about their works. In the end we can nominate the award winners. First let's talk about *The Only One*.

Lo: The subject matter is quite special and the treatment is interesting, but the technique is just so-so. There are not too many special animation treatments. Everything is tied to the screenplay, and on the whole it is quite special. However, at the press conference, the creator stressed that the work has some deeper meaning, but it is not clearly expressed. Of course, this kind of treatment can inspire reflection and questioning. I quite like this work. At least it is interesting.

Hui: I don't see the deeper meaning. I try to follow the subtitles, which go by too fast, in order to understand this work a little. It does not deserve Gold or Silver. It is quite immature, and the pacing can be a little better.

Tsang: It's an interesting work that satirizes current affairs, but the craftsmanship and art style is a bit immature. I don't see this as an award-winning work. The film touches on current themes, and tries to use the past to comment on the present, which is interesting. That is why it is among the finalists.

Siuhak: I agree. I notice that the subtitles say something about current affairs, but I cannot connect them to the visuals, so I didn't catch the meaning.

Fan: The next work is *Rubber's Life*.

Lo: This work is a bit too simple and is not expressed well.

Hui: It is about childhood memories, but the execution is very student film-like. The basic animation techniques are not done well. For example, the eraser-like quash and stretch effect is not well-expressed. Due to the limitations of the character design, the secondary action can be done better. For example, after being torn apart, the eraser should have a rubbery texture, and there should be small pieces of eraser flying about. Many actions are not brought out, and the creator only focuses on big actions. The treatment of other details are done quite well, and the character design is quite interesting. As a minor work it is ok.

- Tsang: This work barely qualifies as a finalist, but one aspect that is worth encouraging is that it takes personal emotions to make them resonate with audiences. The story centers round a familiar object, an eraser, which is quite imaginative. In terms of technical skills, there is room for improvement.
- Siuhak: For a two-minute work, this is expected. The story seems forced. Why is the eraser sad? It seems that you can substitute it for any other object. It can be a tea mug, for example.
- Tsang: It's imagination.
- Siuhak: I know.
- Lo: The work should have more layers.
- Siuhak: It needs to explain why it is an eraser. As a minor work, it is ok, it can be seen as an exercise.
- Tsang: Many of the entries are done in a team. This work only has one creator, which is a good attempt.
- Fan: The next work is *Come On Sun*.
- Lo: It is a well-considered work which injects new ideas into a traditional story, such as expressing the sun's thoughts. In the past, we only focus on what humans think and tell the story from human perspective. Some elements are quite endearing, but many more details can be expressed, like some of the emotional nuances. Now the story is too simple and direct, and the dialogue and personalities do not come across well. Of course, it is a familiar story, so perhaps these elements are unnecessary. Aside from the main character, the other characters should have more scenes. I like the part where they "change into stars".
- Siuhak: I think the character design and execution are quite good. It looks like an illustrated book.
- Hui: I agree with Siuhak. The characters are nice to look at, and as an illustrated book it is quite good, but this is an animation. In this work, most of the human beings have long legs and their feet are small. When the characters jump up and shout, there are problems. Secondly, perhaps this is a budgetary issue, all the characters are men. If there are children characters, the impact would be larger. If the small sun faints upon seeing children on the ground, the story would have been more effective.
- Lo: This is a production-related problem.
- Hui: It has to do with money and time, which we all understand. Also, the story is divided into two parts, the human realm and the sun's realm. However, there is a lack of connection between the two. Why are the suns affected by the humans on earth? Would they not be happier having fun by themselves? They must have seen something to make them feel this way, but what is it? Perhaps it is the plants and humans dying. There has to be a reason but whatever it is, it should not make them not care about themselves or save their own kind.

So if the sun saw something tragic on earth, it would be more convincing.

Tsang: I agree with the above criticism, but I appreciate the challenging nature of the film. Adapting from a traditional fable is difficult, and telling a story from a new perspective can make for a good film. The scene design looks grand, and the use of shots is cinematic. This film has its merits, but is not among my top three.

Fan: The next film is *Chill and Shivering*.

Lo: This is a conventional drama, but the style is interesting. Even though there is not much dialogue, it is effective.

Hui: I think the dialogue is quite witty.

Lo: The dialogue is well-written, and there is not too many extraneous lines. The style is nice to watch and atmospheric, but at the same time does not go over-board. Overall all the elements such as music and action are appropriate. Even though it is not outstanding, it is nicely handled, and the emotions are carried across well. Even though the story happens in one night, it is well-structured and precise. This is a professional work that left an impression with me.

Hui: The story contains many different emotions but is not overly sentimental, which is hard to achieve. I quite like this, but it doesn't quite deserve the Gold, because it is too much stuck in the middle. You can't define what genre it is: is it a comedy, tragedy or black comedy? None of the above. The film is professional, and the beats are precise. The dubbing and credits are all very well done. The creator has to have plenty of experience. Among all the works, this one is the most precise.

Tsang: This film is creative, and resonates with Hong Kongers. The pace is handled well. When I watched it the first time, I didn't like the character design, which doesn't match well with the background. The actions of the mother are not too practiced and look like a 2D animation. However, the whole work is cinematic and textured. If ifva aims to encourage independent spirit, then this work deserves to be honored.

Siuhak: This is quite a good work, but as Tsang said, the character design and background have problems. It's an aesthetics issue.

Hui: I like the part where they have the finger nail pressing down. Such detail works.

Siuhak: I don't like the ending. Why does the main character leave the keys and go away? I don't understand.

Fan: The next work is *Obsession*.

- Lo: It is a representative work. The visuals are pretty and the concept simple, which carry across the idea of “obsession”. On the whole, the actions are stiff. It is a satisfactory work, but a minor one. It lacks drama and does not leave a lasting impression.
- Hui: Two aspects. I quite like this kind of art form. For an animation exercise, it is quite good and well-done. But there is not much of a story, and no clear idea is expressed. If there is an award for animation ability, then this work would get high marks, but in terms of creativity and storytelling, I was quite disappointed in this work.
- Tsang: I agree. The story is weak, but the visuals draw you in. On the whole, this work is not very impactful.
- Siuhak: At the beginning, I found that small dot attractive, but the work soon loses its way.
- Fan: The next work is *Where have the flowers gone?*
- Lo: The production is good, but there are not many surprises.
- Tsang: All the elements are appropriate, but it is not creative and innovative.
- Hui: Technically, it’s good. The story is a homage, but it’s not smartly done. Personally I found it dull. There are no surprises, and nothing too outstanding.
- Siuhak: The font on the title credit is a bit ugly, which does not match the visuals. The city of pig cages is pretty, and if the whole story took place there, it would be more interesting, like the scene in the French film *Playtime*.
- Lo: The lead character turns out to be the pig, which is surprising. The creator could have used some a pig’s characteristics.
- Tsang: It is a very “good student” work. It has a bit of everything, which is a pity.
- Lo: The music is not bad.
- Fan: The next work is *Swarm*.
- Hui: Like *Obsession*, this is another representative work. The action and character expression cannot be faulted. The atmosphere is quite good, and the part with the insect eating is powerful. However the story structure does not really push the work forward. The scenes can be bigger and grander.
- Siuhak: I quite like it. It looks like one of those overseas animation works I saw as a child. It does not look like a local film.
- Lo: The treatment can be better.

- Hui: For a student work, it is very impressive.
- Lo: It is not impactful enough. It can be a grander film.
- Tsang: I am not that impressed with the story, it seems like that it is imitating some master's work. There are no problems with the artwork, but it is not creative enough.
- Fan: The next work is *Eye Bags*.
- Hui: Weird, interesting, powerful.
- Tsang: Like a Wong Kar Wai film.
- Siuhak: It feels like a Lily Lau film, and has the absurdity of a Au Yeung Ying Chai work.
- Lo: The text is well-written.
- Hui: The story is among the most outstanding. The artwork is ugly but nice to watch. It is rough around the edges, and is not as detailed as the other works. I appreciate this film, and I think ifva should recognize this kind of works.
- Siuhak: The roughness is unique to Hong Kong. The creator cleverly turns a weak point into his strength. This is typical of Hong Kong, and that's why I like it.
- Hui: Compared with *The Only One*, this is just as rough around the edges, but this work has better aesthetics.
- Tsang: The entrant is my student. I personally like this work the best. The design of the gold fish is clever. As a work done by a single individual, it is outstanding on the whole. It has many textures, like Lion Rock, umbrella, etc., but it is not shocking for its own sake.
- Fan: I suggest discussing *Resettlement Memory* first, and then let Chung share his views on all the works at once.
- Lo: This is a good work and atmospheric. It turns some Hong Kong elements into another kind of expression, which is rare. It transforms everyday observations into something else and expresses them slowly. Even though there is no dialogue, its treatment of the theme of "finding" and restructuring of memory is quite special, and expresses many feelings well. Pictorially, the work is quite meaningful, and the music is good. It takes the audience into a world of memories, and is a good work.
- Hui: I can't fault this piece. Among the nine works, this one uses symbols the best, and is bright and successful. It is not very realistic and does not have a solid story, but nevertheless allows you to understand its meaning. This is hard to achieve, but the creator did it. He uses music throughout the film, which matches with the story and pictures. Among the finalist works, this one is among the top three. I appreciate the creator's style because he

attempts something new. Mixing different media into an animation is difficult because the different ambience is hard to harmonize, and the creator did it well. It deserves a Gold Award.

Tsang: The mix-media treatment is better than *Chill and Shivering*, and the texture and artwork are good. The story is well-treated. This is an artistic work.

Siuhak: I agree. The bus is pretty.

Tsang: In terms of character design, there are liquid-shaped objects with nice textures.

Siuhak: This is that kind of work ifva should have. It reminds me of the “world animation” section at the film festival.

Chung: I like the artwork in *Chill and Shivering*. It is an interesting film with many local elements. I also like *Obsession* because its artwork has a hand-made feel. However, I don’t know what its story is trying to say. *Eye Bags* is a very distinctive film but I feel it has too much dialogue, which supports the visuals. The visuals are good too, and the editing and animation are done well. *Resettlement Memory* should be seen on the big screen.

Fan: Now you can start nominating award-winners.

Siuhak: I choose *Resettlement Memory* and *Eye Bags*. I think you all feel the same.

Tsang: I find it hard to choose between the two. They each have merits.

Siuhak: Both films have local elements, but I prefer *Resettlement Memory* because it is more rare.

Lo: It has no dialogue, so even foreign audiences can understand it.

Tsang: One is done by a company, and the other by an individual. It depends on what you prefer.

Lo: I think as a work, *Eye Bags* is quite perfect, and you can’t ask more of it in terms of technique. *Resettlement Memory* has deeper meanings.

Fan: Is anyone opposed to *Resettlement Memory* getting Gold? Or do you have other nominations for Gold?

Tsang: I think *Eye Bags* deserves either Gold or Silver.

Chung: Can we have two Gold Awards?

Lo: I think we can decide on a Gold and Silver between the two.

Siuhak: *Resettlement Memory* should get Gold.

Lo: *Resettlement Memory* is of international standard. The dialogue in *Eye Bags* is too overwhelming.

Fan: So *Resettlement Memory* gets Gold, *Eye Bags* gets Silver. How about Special Mention?

Lo: *Chill and Shivering* is good on the whole, both in terms of subject matter and production.

Hui: I agree. Other works have merit, but not quite deserving of Special Mention.

Fan: If you all agree, the Gold Award goes to *Resettlement Memory*, Silver Award goes to *Eye Bags*, and *Chill and Shivering* gets Special Mention.

Animation Category

Gold Award

Resettlement Memory

Lee Kwok-wai

Silver Award

Eye Bags

Ho Wai-kwan

Special Mention

Chill and Shivering

Vincent Yip and Kwok Wai-chung Philip