

## The 15<sup>th</sup> ifva Open Category Jury Meeting Transcript

Jurors in Attendance: Percy Fung (FUNG), Pang Ho-cheung (PANG), Law Kar (LAW), Wong Ain Ling (WONG), Chan Wai (CHAN)

Organizer Representatives: Teresa Kwong (KWONG), Kattie Fan (FAN)

PANG: How were these 12 works selected?

KWONG: We had more than a hundred entries in the Open Category this year. In the first round, Kattie, Vincent Chui and Simon Chung picked forty something works out of all the entries, then in December, Percy, Ain Ling and Chan Wai picked 12 works out of the forty odd ones. Do you want to know more about the selection process in the first two rounds?

PANG: No, I just want to know the rough figures.

KWONG: Now we can go through the 12 works one by one as a warm up exercise, then in the next stage we can discuss which works should be awarded. The first one up is **Revolution**.

FUNG: Let me go first. Among all the works this one should receive some consideration, even though it may not be the best work. As its director stated, the film pays homage to Johnnie To Kei-Fung, and uses his style to make a high school drama. That was the reason the film made it past the second round. In terms of creativity and style, the film is imitative, and is therefore of inferior quality than a lot of other works. Allowing it to be among the finalists is a sort of encouragement. We hope the director will keep trying.

PANG: I think it definitely deserves to be among the finalists. However, it doesn't go beyond imitation to become something else. It simply parodies other people's works. In this respect it's more like something you see on Youtube than an indie film. Tarrantino also borrowed from **City on Fire** in **Reservoir Dogs**, but it is important to upgrade from your source. I don't mind that he pays homage to Johnnie To, but Johnnie To may not be particularly flattered by this homage.

CHAN: It's just an imitation.

PANG: That's right, it's too similar to what you see on YouTube. I think **Revolution** wants to make a statement by using gangster film aesthetics in a school setting, which in a way is similar to **The Betrayed Tigers**, but the latter is far more mature in its filming technique and acting.

KWONG: The next one is **Homecoming**.

LAW: I asked about independent spirit just now. I don't want to put down or praise **Homecoming**, but a film like this is clear in its storytelling, rich in emotions, and has a smooth style. Even though it is about racial minorities, its narrative style is quite traditional and there is nothing experimental about it. It is very good in describing details and emotions. The film feels mainstream even though it is about Filipinos. What is independent about it?

KWONG: I don't know how other jury members feel about this...

LAW: This is just a hypothetical question. It doesn't reflect my own views.

- KWONG: Everyone has a different interpretation of independent spirit, and each of you can have your own, too.
- CHAN: I think independent film is relative to commercial film. The latter is a commercial product, and so has to take into account many considerations, which limits its choice of subject matters. Some topics lack commercial appeal, and commercial films won't touch them. Yet these subject matters are worthy ones, and I hope to see them explored in independent films.
- WONG: The entries this year are quite mainstream in terms of narrative style and filming techniques. This film is quite rare in that it deals with the world of Filipino maids in a way that is not patronizing. When I was having dinner with Chan Wai just now, we discussed the fact that most Hong Kong films are weak in portraying people. This film is the exception in that it delves deeply into its characters, and the result is quite moving without being melodramatic. It shows the employer as nitpicking and unforgiving, and the portrayal of the son is not overly twee. It shows the progression of the relationship between the Filipino mother and her son from animosity in the beginning to the mother understanding her son at the end. The script is not ground-breaking, but is rich in details. The acting is also fine. On the whole this is quite a solid film.
- LAW: My own view is that there is no such thing as independent spirit. You can only define a film in terms of whether or not it is mainstream. If it is made by a big studio then you could say it is not an independent film and cannot enter this competition. It is hard to define independent spirit, but you can tell whether a work is creative. I only want to raise this issue, but not try to evaluate all the works by this criterion alone. I think that even if a work is mainstream in style, it should get high marks if it moves me.
- PANG: My definition is whether the work has been commissioned by others, that means if an employer or company like RTHK commissions the work, then it is not independent in spirit. Independence means initiating the work yourself, and it doesn't matter if the film has been shown in theatres. Some works are better than RTHK shows in terms of production value, like *The Newlywed* and *The Betrayed Tigers*. Their storyline is complete, the narrative is clear and every aspect is above par. But aside from the fact that they were independently produced, there is not much in these films that is innovative. Sometimes I don't mind if a work is rough on the edges, I really want to see something new. But this year there are few works like that. In terms of production *Homecoming* is okay, and the character portrayal is quite good. Subject matters like this can easily become clichéd, like having mean employers, yet the characters in this film are realistic. The script, casting and acting are good.
- FUNG: None of the characters are perfect, and they don't easily fall into either good or bad categories. This makes the film stand out. Also the performance of the kid is very good. Regarding independent spirit, in the past we consider elements such as whether or not the film is experimental or innovative. The flip side of that are films that are school exercises. Many of the entries are school projects, like *Chinese Opera Boy*, with the school dictating certain requirements, which is like having a studio boss looking over your film.
- LAW: Some school projects even have the teacher participating, paying for expenses or helping out with editing. Personally I don't consider these issues...
- FUNG: This should not be an important consideration in the Open Category...

- PANG: The end credits for **Revolution** shows IVE as the copyright owner because the film was made with school resources.
- CHAN: This year there are many school projects. Both **Camera Gun** and **Poor Child, Rich Mind** are from Poly U, **Chinese Opera Boy** is from APA, **Life Goes On** is independent, **Daylily** and **I can See, I can't See** are from City U, **The Outsider** is also a school project...
- KWONG: As far as I know she is in secondary school matriculation class, and she made an English version of the film to enter into an English language video competition. Her secondary school probably provided some equipment support but no money. For your information, **The Newlywed** is a RTHK commissioned project, **The Betrayed Tigers** is from Fresh Wave Short Film Competition, **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village** was part of a program of shorts that commemorated Ying E Chi's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Ying E Chi received a project fund, and commissioned 10 directors to each make a short on the subject of independent spirit. **Homecoming** is an APA graduation film.
- PANG: All the films have backers!
- KWONG: The next work is **Camera Gun**.
- FUNG: This is quite an innovative work. The camera work and camera angles are very impressive. The content and creativity are both good, but the finishing is rough. This is one of my top two choices, its creativity and experimental nature both deserve high marks.
- LAW: This is quite an outstanding work and worthy of discussion. At first I thought it was a bit nonsensical, as if he is just playing around, but parts of it are quite imaginative, like the relationship between camera and gun. In the end he doesn't quite deliver, though. I can see how a camera can become a gun, but don't see how a gun can carry the function of a camera. His thinking is outside of the mainstream, and the storyline doesn't follow dramatic conventions, it doesn't develop out of narrative structure or character relationships. Also the image design is quite unusual. I don't see any external references in his film. It doesn't follow any trends, and is quite independent. Pang Ho-Cheung has made films about cameras and guns. Perhaps he will have something to say about this film.
- PANG: Actually my impression of this film is just so-so. Its concept is interesting, but you only need five minutes to tell it. I see how a camera can resemble a gun, but the ending is poorly done. It sets up certain rules of the game but does not follow through.
- CHAN: When I saw it on the big screen today, I felt its faults are magnified, and I have more reservations about it than when I saw it in the first round. I chose it as a finalist because its concept is independent, but its narrative doesn't strive for completeness. I enter into its world, but don't know what its conclusions are.
- PANG: I don't like the fact that it complains that Hong Kong has a lot of junk information, but doesn't say anything coherent about it. It's like a grumpy old man's complaint, especially towards the end. The beginning is quite interesting, but after five minutes there is no development.
- CHAN: The scene where the girl points a gun at the man and asks him how he could kill

people, it subverts the whole film, but doesn't tell me anything. It does exactly what the film is trying to protest against.

PANG: It doesn't know what it's protesting against. It seems to be defending itself, but is actually detailing its crimes. The scene where the girl pulls the sales person to a back alley, I don't know what it is attacking. The film keeps fighting against something, but what is it?

FUNG: At the screening just now a lot of people were asking about this film. I'll try to explain it from the director's point of view. The lead character thinks that people are hypocrites, so his camera becomes a gun, while the girl's gun becomes a camera. She thinks that she should kill the magazine editor not with a gun but with a camera. The director's intent is not easy to understand. When the girl kills the man with a gun-like camera, there are two meanings. One is reincarnation—that's why you see images of Tibet, and after he is reborn he rethinks his own hypocrisy. That's the director's explanation.

LAW: Even though he doesn't express himself clearly, but he is passionate about film. Not only is he the writer and director, he is also involved in camera, art direction and sound mixing. He is crazy about the meaning of film. The lead character thinks society is hypocritical but he is a part of it. It's like the Buddhist parable in which a fanatical person is so convinced he is on the right path that he is actually on the wrong one. This reasoning can be applied to gossip magazines or even the democratic movement. Of course this is just my free association, but the film gives me the space to make these associations. It is not a badly made film, it doesn't involve the audience on an emotional level because it is experimental, whether or not that is successful. I feel this person is really keen about film since he takes part in six different departments. Even though it is rough on the edges, it is nevertheless interesting.

WONG: We can all agree that this is an unusual film, and should get extra points for creativity. But I feel it is confused; its concept take precedent, but you soon realize what that concept is. The girl faces two people. One tells her not to kill the chief editor, but later on she confronts the sales person. If she is able to show understanding about the editor's difficulties, why is she unable to sympathize with the sales person, who after all is just a little guy trying to make a living? This is a sort of conceptual confusion. Also the transcendence scenes at the end looks more like parody to me, I don't see any transcendence at all.

KWONG: ***Chinese Opera Boy.***

WONG: The acting is good, the lead actor is quite unusual.

FUNG: Does he really know Chinese opera?

CHAN: Yes he does.

PANG: I want to make a more general observation first. ***Camera Gun*** is rough on the edges and immature, but it has real personal convictions. Some works are smooth in terms of technique and execution, but are too politically correct. They are concerned with issues that juries like this tend to favor, like bemoaning the loss of traditional culture, dealing with issues like urban redevelopment, concern about racial minorities, etc. I'm not sure whether they really care about these issues or not, but these works seem to violate the independent spirit. Whether you pander to the tastes of a studio boss or to the ifva jury amounts to the same thing.

- CHAN: I don't know about the other student works, but at APA we don't consider the **ifva** when they plan their productions. Their first concern is whether they can graduate. When we are at the planning stage and discussing projects with the students, we often get into fierce arguments because the students are passionate about what they want to express on screen. They can use the school's equipment and have a team of classmates helping them. They realize once they graduate they may never have the same resources at their disposal again. So they fight with the teachers to get their films made and they never listen to us. They are quite politically incorrect in this regard. So the definition of political correctness varies depending on the context. I think most young people just want to make the films they want to make. You can't force them. After they're done with the film they leave school, so they don't really have to listen to the teachers.
- PANG: So these two films are their own ideas?
- CHAN: Yes, and neither film is easy to make. We questioned the director's knowledge about Chinese opera, as well as how he planned to execute it and find actors for the roles. In the same way we warned the director of **Homecoming** about the difficulty of directing his Filipino actors if he does not speak Tagalog. We worry about execution problems, and when they completed their films they felt very pleased with themselves. We should be fair about our criticisms of these films, because the school put up a lot of resistance. We warned them based on our professional experience that they may not be able to achieve what they intended. Yet their persistence becomes "political correctness" under a different context!
- PANG: I like **Chinese Opera Boy** because of its completeness. I just want to understand how this film came about.
- KWONG: Works exploring similar topics have not only appeared in the Open Category in recent years, but also in other categories such as animation.
- LAW: I think **Chinese Opera Boy** is very exemplary; it is like turning an opera lesson into film, I'm sure Chinese opera associations would welcome this film. Many problems in the film are easily solved. The master quickly accepts him as his protégé, and then he appears on stage. The message seems to be you will succeed as long as you work hard, and your teacher and your mom will be moved. Everything is just too simple.
- PANG: The film doesn't explain why the lead character likes Chinese opera, except that his mom took him to see a performance when he was young. He is not a typical teenager, and is certainly an exceptional case.
- LAW: The director over-simplifies the process.
- PANG: By comparison I think **Homecoming** is more realistic.
- CHAN: I think his treatment is too conservative. Every problem is solved in 20 minutes. That's why I have reservations about it.
- FUNG: In terms of filming technique, **Chinese Opera Boy** is quite an accomplished school exercise. Part of the reason is that APA provides a lot of resources, like motion picture film for filming, color grading, etc. But the lead character is too simplistic.

WONG: I think it is interesting how he treats the stage. I'm a fan of Chinese opera myself. The director does not favor filmic expression over stage performance, which is commendable. In terms of stage structure and movement of the actors the director did a good job.

KWONG: **Poor Child, Rich Mind.**

FUNG: This film has 5 directors, one of whom is that of **Camera Gun.**

LAW: Did they each direct one section?

FUNG: I don't know how they organized the production, but in the discussion period just now they mentioned the film has 5 directors.

CHAN: We chose it to be one of the finalists because of its portrayal of the children and their lives, which is quite good, even though it is not outstanding. It doesn't say anything new about the topic. It is enough that the film is among the finalists.

FUNG: I think his treatment is quite special. But like **Camera Gun**, perhaps it has to do with the school's resources or its custom, the quality of the production is not high.

KWONG: The next work is **Life Goes On.**

CHAN: The subject matter is quite politically correct. Technically, there is nothing special about it either in terms of its storytelling or camera work.

PANG: The subject matter is well selected, but as it develops nothing much comes out of it. When I was young I lived in Yue Man Square, so my interest was piqued, but as the film progressed it does not have much to do Yue Man Square, except for the last shot where you see apm Mall in the skyline.

CHAN: I'm not sure whether it's because he failed to grasp the topic, or that his technical skills are not up to par.

FUNG: The director is a student at IVE and lives in the area. He is telling his own story in the film.

KWONG: The next work is **Daylily.**

WONG: The first time I saw it I was very pleased because it captures young girls'...

(Law Kar Kar comes back from making a phone call.)

KWONG: Does Law Kar have anything to add?

LAW: About **Poor Kid, Rich Mind** have a small comment, that it is a bit superficial.

WONG: **Daylily** is likable and has nice details. But when I saw it on the big screen this time I was less impressed, whereas **I can See, I can't See** had a lot of problems when I saw it on the small screen, but on the big screen I felt it captures some fine points well. I still think **Daylily** is enjoyable, but it didn't have the same impact on me as the first time I saw it.

CHAN: On the big screen everything seems banal. The actors portray adolescent girls well, but don't go beyond it. I enjoyed it when I first saw it on DVD, but on the big screen the feeling was gone.

LAW: When I first saw it I thought the first ten minutes was good, but the film is too long. All the scenes are of the same three or four girls lying on the grass or on the hillside. It becomes too much. I was impressed with the opening credits with the text against a natural background and the first ten minutes describing school life, but as the film progressed every scene looked the same.

PANG: Is there a limit on the length of the entries?

KWONG: The entries have to be 30 minutes or less.

PANG: No wonder many works are 29 minutes and 57 seconds long! Sometimes they just don't know when to stop. If you cut down *Daylily* by 15 minutes it will be great; after the first 15 minutes the film just drags on. Perhaps they feel that with shorter films they are at a disadvantage. I don't know whether or not it was this film, but the end credit for one of the films was so fast you could barely read it. This shows they care less about the integrity of the film than whether or not it fits the rules. I think the actors in this film are okay, but nothing much happens towards the end.

FUNG: The actors are good. The production and camera work are okay. I was prepared for the difference between the big and small screen, so it didn't affect me. At the post-screening discussions just now, they said the shooting of the film lasted 10 days, and they did not direct the actors much on set. It was more like playing around. The three actors didn't know one another before the film, and became well acquainted as the filming progressed, which is why their performance is so naturalistic.

LAW: What format was this shot on?

PANG: It should be either DV or HDV.

LAW: Has it been color graded?

FUNG: Yes, it has a softness that normal video lacks. Also the balance was done well; you don't see the color shifting abruptly from scene to scene. The equipment they used was probably not as professional as that of the ADC or APA projects.

CHAN: The post-production is done very well..

KWONG: *The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village.*

PANG: I can't imagine that this is a 14 minute film. At first when I saw the overlapping stills pictures, I thought it was part of an opening credit sequence. I feel 14 minutes of this is just too long.

WONG: I like it a lot. It is raw and simple. It only has one concept. I think using sounds to link up different things is clever and creative.

PANG: I agree, but it shouldn't go on for 14 minutes. I could bare 7 or 8 minutes, but towards the end it just keeps repeating itself.

LAW: I've seen this film twice, the first time at Ying E Chi's screening, and both times I saw it on the big screen. Whether you feel it is long depends on your mood. Its intention is to inspire you to think about an issue, so it needs to be of a certain length in order for you to get into the topic. I like its concept and technique, like

making collages out of different elements, or the part where the bulldozer moves across the screen and houses start appearing. The use of sound is also good. When I saw it the second time I was even more drawn in. The film doesn't want to shock or surprise you, but aims to inspire nostalgic feelings about families, places and the passage of time. These feelings need time to percolate. It is not like a dramatic film that leads you along through the storyline, so 14 minutes is not too long. Also I heard she plans on making more films on the same topic. But it is hard to compare a film like this with, say, **Homecoming**, because they are very different.

- PANG: This is more like a documentary. It is hard to judge it according to narrative film standards.
- LAW: It is all very subjective. You can't use the same standards to judge the two films. You can only say you like one more than the other.
- WONG: I like the way it captures the feeling of time. It really touches me.
- CHAN: I agree with Law Kar. I like its concept. The difficult thing about this film is that I can't use documentary standards to judge it, because it doesn't tell me anything new. This film's method is interesting when you view it from a Hong Kong context, because many of our old things are gone, and you can only trace it from people who have lived there. I like this film because it is poetic, but I don't think of it as a good documentary.
- LAW: I don't think of it as a documentary. Experimental films can have elements of narrative and documentary. The difficulty we face is comparing a film like this with something like **Homecoming**, which is intricate, documentary-like and full of emotions. Both deal with socially conscious themes, but one is experimental while the other is more conventionally narrative. So it is hard to compare them.
- FUNG: Also this film is more graphically oriented, it straddles between animation and live action.
- PANG: This is not a documentary. It is more like something you see playing in an endless loop in an art gallery rather than a film you watch in a cinema.
- KWONG: I should add that according to ifva regulations for Open Category, we do not specifically state where the works have to be exhibited. In response to Percy's point, the rules for animation category state that works have to be shot frame by frame.
- FUNG: This work is done on a frame by frame basis, and in fact some Animation Category entries in the past have used similar techniques. But this is not important. Many Open Category award winners in recent years employed various techniques in their works.
- KWONG: The next one is ***I can See, I can't See***.
- CHAN: When I first saw it in the first round I quite liked it. When I saw it again I still thought it was complete, but technically lacking. It creates a special atmosphere that takes the audience into an imaginary world. It handles the topic well, and allows you to know that everything happens in the man's imagination, then it takes you to a melancholic place. Among all the works this is the one I like the best.



LAW: Do you mean everything that happens is the guy's imagination? I don't understand which part is his imagination and which part he actually sees. Is the ending real?

CHAN: When the girl gives him the broken kaleidoscope, he intercuts this with shots in which he imagines the girl visits him.

LAW: That means he actually almost becomes blind?

PANG: Everything after his injury is imagined.

LAW: You mean he imagines the visits?

PANG: I don't know. That's what I want to ask too.

CHAN: Perhaps he is technically deficient. The turning point is when she gives him the broken kaleidoscope. Perhaps he doesn't use enough shots, and there is just one line of dialogue to express the turning point. He doesn't show the man's reaction.

PANG: I wouldn't have known if you didn't tell me! I like the role of the girl, and the scene when they are playing on the stairs.

LAW: Even if what you said is valid, what is the main theme of the film? Is it just about an introverted guy's imagination? What is the film trying to say?

CHAN: It's about a guy who is lonely and misunderstood. Technically he may not have provided sufficient information at the crucial point to tell his story, but I think the script is well written.

KWONG: The next work is *The Outsider*.

PANG: You mentioned there is an English version as well. When I saw it I thought the film doesn't quite hold together. In the middle of it she decides that she has been using the interviewee, but that may be part of the design. I felt uneasy about this. She has been exploiting him, and then comes to a realization in the middle, which in itself could be another type of exploitation. Several years ago there was another work called *Desire of Egg*, which was more worthy of debate. In this film I don't know what made the director come to this realization and why. Is the English version set up the same way?

KWONG: More or less.

WONG: I was uneasy when watching this too. One should not question the motives of a documentary filmmaker, but with this I can't help but question her motives. By contrast *Poor Kid, Rich Mind* is more simple and direct.

PANG: And a lot more genuine.

LAW: I agree, but *Poor Kid, Rich Mind* does not go deep enough, and does not follow through with its subjects. But at least it is touching in its depictions of the kids' everyday life and how they have fun under those circumstances. This film, on the other hand, does not move me. Her self realization just came about out of the blue.

KWONG: The next work is *Newlywed*.

LAW: It reminds me of Jessey Tsang's *Lovers on the Road*. Both feature Joman Chiang as a woman who goes on a trip and meets another Putonghua speaking man, has a brief encounter with him and then part ways. I've always liked watching Joman act. She is pretty and likable on screen. This film differs from Jessey's in that they travel on the train to Tibet, but it doesn't make good use of the railway journey.

CHAN: It is well made.

LAW: Her spiritual quest is just talk.

PANG: I like the pretty images, but should I give it high marks because of that? It goes all the way to Tibet, but what it wants to say could have been said in Tai Kok Tsui. The production has abundant resources because it is a RTHK production, so the production value is high, but does it deserve an award? It doesn't have much to say. It focuses on two newlyweds, but fails to shed much light on their problems.

CHAN: I don't really care how he got the resources to go to Tibet, but whether it is necessary for the film to take place there. What Pang said was right, the story Chau. What concerns me is the director doesn't seem to care what happens to the woman. The story takes place on a picturesque journey. She comes to some sort of epiphany, and everything is alright again.

LAW: It's questionable whether it is an epiphany. She merely decides to stay with her husband.

KWONG: The next one is *The Betrayed Tigers*.

PANG: Quite interesting. Even though there are traces of other films in it, it is well executed.

CHAN: It's like *Revolution*.

PANG: But better made.

CHAN: Because he is in a more senior level in school.

PANG: Should we as jury members take this into account?

CHAN: There is nothing new about the story.

PANG: The director admits that he was inspired by 《The Mission》, but the film is executed with precision.

CHAN: A studio head would want to hire this director.

PANG: If a studio head asked me to recommend a dependable new director, I would definitely put his name forward.

CHAN: He is a safe choice.

FUNG: This film almost didn't make it to the final round, but I insisted that it does, because it represents another kind of work, one that approaches industry standards on a technical level.

LAW: I think there should be works like this every year. If every film were like *I can See, I can't See* the audience will fall asleep.

PANG: I think this director may well work in the industry in a few years. Now he is still imitating others, and hasn't found his subject yet, but he is technically mature. He ought to be encouraged.

KWONG: Don't worry, there are bound to be more works like this in the future.

FUNG: There have been fewer experimental and innovative films this year.

PANG: In the past there were film like Wong Ching Po's *I Love Bath Tape* and Wong Choi Fung's *Desire of Egg* that were both experimental and controversial at the same time.

FUNG: Perhaps the new works are too calculating. Or maybe the competition gives the impression that it had not been as insistent on the experimental and innovative nature of the works.

CHAN: I think its part of the general atmosphere at large. The works reflect what people care about.

LAW: Perhaps it is part of the college education nowadays. 30 or 40 years ago there was no such thing as professional education in this field, and so there were few technical requirements. People just took a camera and filmed whatever they wanted, and there were a lot of unconventional ideas. Now the schools require that works achieve a certain technical level. You can't just film a guy rolling around in bed or commit hara-kiri. Nowadays you have to have a story, plot development, characters.

PANG: Nowadays there are fewer extremist, controversial films.

KWONG: I don't think the amount of resources affect the works. For example Korean shorts are well funded, but they tackle much broader issues. Perhaps it has to do with the education system.

CHAN: I have seen student works from Taiwan and the Mainland. Whether dramas or documentaries, these works have a much higher social awareness than Hong Kong films, and you can also observe the relationship between society and its people. By watching these works I know what their authors care about. Taiwanese films tend to be more sentimental and more individualistic. Hong Kong works are more and more technically sophisticated, but I can't tell from them how their directors view themselves.

KWONG: We can now nominate up to five films that deserve awards. The other way is to nominate the Gold Award winner. Or we can eliminate some works first.

LAW: Let's eliminate some works first.

(The jury members vote for films that they want to eliminate.)

KWONG: *The Outsider, Revolution, Life Goes On, Chinese Opera Boy, I can See, I can't See, Newlywed* get 5 votes, *Camera Gun* gets 4 votes. At the end, *Homecoming, The Betrayed Tigers, The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village, Camera Gun* and *Daylily* remain.

- FUNG: I want to say something on behalf of **Camera Gun**. Compared to all the other works it is more innovative and experimental. We can now go on to nominate award winners. I think **The Betrayed Tigers** deserves a special mention at least. I like **Homecoming** because it is complete. The second place is **Camera Gun**.
- PANG: I hope **Homecoming** gets gold, **The Betrayed Tigers** gets silver, **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village** and **Camera Gun** gets special mention.
- WONG: I suggest giving both **Homecoming** and **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village** Gold Awards because I find it hard to pick between the two. I like both, and they are very different. I suggest special mention for **Daylily**.
- CHAN: I nominate gold award for **Homecoming**, special mention for **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village**, silver award for **Daylily**.
- LAW: I second that. Gold award for **Homecoming**, special mention for **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village** and silver award for **Daylily**.
- KWONG: Then the Gold Award goes to **Homecoming**, **Daylily**, **Camera Gun** and **The Betrayed Tigers** each gets two votes.
- FUNG: I can take away my vote for **Camera Gun**.
- PANG: I can also take away my vote for **The Betrayed Tigers**. I feel the film is technically mature even though it is not experimental. I would like to give him some encouragement.
- LAW: **The Betrayed Tigers** is of professional quality, while **Camera Gun** is quite special.
- CHAN: If there were two special mentions, I'd like to give them to **The Betrayed Tigers** and **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village**.
- PANG: I agree with having two special mentions.
- KWONG: So **Daylily** gets silver, while **Camera Gun** is the runner-up?
- PANG: We don't have this category, all 12 finalists are runner-ups.
- FUNG: Is three special mentions too many?
- WONG: If it is a choice between **The Betrayed Tigers** and **Camera Gun**, I'd rather pick the latter.
- LAW: Can we have three special mentions? It's just a certificate. We can state which jury member nominated the films.
- KWONG: That's fine, as long as you all reach consensus. So our final result is Gold Award for **Homecoming**, Silver Award for **Daylily**, three special mentions go to **The Betrayed Tigers**, **The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village** and **Camera Gun**. Please keep the results secret until we announce the winners, and please come to the award ceremony next week and be our award presenters.
- LAW: I think we can give some comments for the special mentions to explain why we awarded them.

- FUNG: Should we do a review of the whole competition?
- KWONG: We are thinking about changing the categories, but that is quite complicated. We want to encourage more documentaries to enter the competition, but don't want to rashly add another category. We also thought of having a best documentary award in the Open Category.
- LAW: Tammy Cheung already has a documentary competition, which is well run and the works are of quite high standards. I think we should keep the Open Category, and think about how we can improve its overall quality. If it is Open Category, it should be open to all so that the entries reach international standards. For example, we should encourage people in the film industry such as Peter Chan or Pang Ho-Cheung to take part. At present the entries are stuck at the level of graduation works.
- CHAN: Perhaps it has to do with the length requirements. I wonder why there are so few RTHK productions.
- FAN: In the first round there were a few of them among the 40 something works but they didn't make it to the final round.
- CHAN: Producing a 30 minute work without the support of colleges or Fresh Wave is quite difficult.
- PANG: Why was rule about length of the entries changed from 60 minutes to 30 minutes?
- KWONG: A 60 minute film is considered a medium-length work, not a short. We also looked at the practice of other short film festivals. The other consideration is distribution. Actually we have always welcomed people from all walks of life take part in the competition. In the first and second edition we had people like Yu Lik-Wai and Jia Jiang-Ke taking part. In recent years the entries are mainly graduation films from universities.
- LAW: Does the ifva encourage people from the Mainland to take part?
- KWONG: We have an Asian category.
- PANG: You can raise the amount of prize money. This is an important consideration for independent filmmakers. For example if I were to choose between Pusan Production Plan and Hong Kong Asian Film Finance Forum I would choose the former. Not only do I get to meet more people, the prize money is higher.
- KWONG: You think if we raise the prize money to \$100,000, it would attract better entries?
- PANG: Yes, and if the works are not up to standard that year you can withhold the first prize. I think documentaries should be separate from non-documentaries because they are hard to compare. I was in the jury for a Korean film festival, and we had to choose between a musical and a documentary as recipient for an award, and we spent the better part of a day discussing what standards we should apply to judge the two kinds of films.
- KWONG: Germany's Oberhausen Short Film Festival is an international festival that states as its organizing principles certain criteria such as experimental and social awareness.
- PANG: Whereas we don't have a theme.

KWONG: We have also considered allowing Hong Kong works to compete in the same category as other Asian films, reserving a “national” prize for Hong Kong films. I don't know if this is a way to raise ifva's standards.

PANG: In addition to the prizes, we should also consider the artists' continual development. For example we could provide sponsorship of post-production services to help the artists with their next films.

KWONG: We tried this several years ago in which the Gold Award winner can enjoy services at Cyberport, valid for one year, but in the end he did not take advantage of it.

PANG: Perhaps the time limit can be extended to more than a year. The sponsorship could also be given to Special Mention recipients.

KWONG: Thank you for your suggestions. ifva should keep improving and not stay at one place. I agree with your point about the prize money. It had remained the same for the past 5 years.

### **Open Category**

#### **Gold Award**

*Homecoming*

Zune KWOK

#### **Silver Award**

*Daylily*

Wallis Tsz-wai CHAN

#### **Special Mention**

*The Life and Times of Ho Chung Village*

Tsui-shan TSANG

#### **Special Mention**

*The Betrayed Tigers*

Stanley Ming-yin LIU

#### **Special Mention**

*Camera Gun*

Jason Man-kwan YIU