

17th ifva Youth Category Jury Meeting Minutes

Jurors in attendance: Adam WONG (WONG), CHEUK Wan-chi (CHEUK), Clement CHENG (CHENG), Ger CHOI (CHOI), Kit HUNG (HUNG)

Representatives from ifva: Teresa KWONG (KWONG), Kattie FAN (FAN)

KWONG: Today we are going to discuss the award winners for the youth category. Our emphasis for this festival is independent spirit and creativity. This year we have received more than 80 works for this category; this category accepts works from Hong Kong citizens that are under the age of 18. Last December, Adam Wong, Clement Cheng and Kit Hung went through all more than 80 entries and selected the 9 finalists that all of you watched today. Today all 5 of you are going to select the 3 award winners from those 9 finalists. The recipient of the Gold Award will receive cash prize of \$30,000 and a Sony HD recorder. The recipient of the Silver Award will receive cash prize of \$20,000 and a Sony HD recorder whereas the 3 recipients of Special Mention will all receive certificate from ifva. We will discuss the merits of each work and will begin with ***The Love of Unforgettable***.

CHEUK: I find it very old fashioned, but I do appreciate its sound effect, the background sound is very clear. Overall it does not leave a strong impression on me. Also, my impression is that the directors could not find someone older to play the role of the father in the film.

CHOI: I thought they figured out a clever way to get around that issue.

CHEUK: The acting was not bad.

CHOI: The actors' performance was decent; it felt a bit dull in the beginning but it got better gradually.

CHEUK: The directing was quite good actually, but the editing needs to be redone.

WONG: I agree that the acting was decent and it really stood out. The film is implicit and solid with decent technique. It is unfortunate that the story lacks a meaningful message; I can see a bit of suspense but ultimately I do not see a clear message.

CHEUK: I value the story and its narrative a lot, otherwise a film can be just a lot of techniques all mixed together.

KWONG: We will proceed to discuss ***Addiction***.

CHOI: Originally I found it interesting and daring, especially its visuals, but the final sentence ruins my impression of the entire work.

CHENG: This can be a project for school.

CHEUK: Perhaps the teacher asked the director to add that final sentence.

CHOI: I will not speculate on the motive of the director with that final sentence. I believe it is great to see young people trying to express themselves with daring images, but the final scene seems to suggest that the director rejects everything that she was trying to express before.

WONG: Perhaps after venting her anger, she has decided to accept reality.

HUNG: I would say the content of the film is very strong with its own thinking that embraces the independent spirit.

CHEUK: Compared to the films that I had seen as a juror in other festivals, the content of this film does not stand out.

CHENG: I agree with Adam's view that this film shows good technique and the transition between each scene is smooth. The pace of the film, however, leaves something to desire with; it is a perceptive film but as a whole it does not stand out.

WONG: I actually think the pace of the film is decent with a nice buildup to the eventual explosion of anger. The criticism seems to lack depth though.

KWONG: We will proceed to discuss *Future*.

CHEUK: The remark that I left for this film was I want to attend university.

HUNG: I saw a film that dealt with similar subject last year. In comparison, this work does not stand out.

CHEUK: There were some nice shots in terms of editing. And if this is a project for school, its directing has a clear sense of purpose.

CHOI: I feel that our secondary school students are too long-winded and worry too much not getting their message across when shooting films. The use of power point in the middle of them film is redundant but perhaps it has something to do with its being a school project or the expectation of its instructor.

WONG: My impression is that the storytelling depends too heavily on words.

CHEUK: I do not think it is appropriate to inject words into a film at will, nor is it right to explain so much about one's work.

CHOI: Perhaps it is better to deal with a simpler subject matter.

WONG: I think this is already a rather simple subject matter and the director does express himself in his work.

CHEUK: The good thing is that the main character is rather handsome and manages to hold my attention.

WONG: You find him handsome?

CHEUK: Quite handsome, I love his lips. (All laughed)

KWONG: We will proceed to discuss *The Ascension*.

CHEUK: This is one of the few works that are both solid and neat; I could sense it is made under the influence of American TV drama. I appreciate the directors' ability to gather so much resources and manpower to put this film together. They clearly know what they want to achieve with the film's rhythm; it begins with a nice buildup and suddenly picks up its tempo and the ending is crisp. I very much enjoy the contrast in tempo within the film.

HUNG: I have seen something similar before.

CHEUK: I also appreciate the director's word in the film. He does not try to convince the audience how powerful his story is, he merely tells the audience that he has never made a film without dialogue.

HUNG: In terms of neatness, this is a better work than *The Love of Unforgettable*.

WONG: Overall it lacks surprises but it is considered a decent work for the youth category.

CHOI: The technique is neat but I have trouble understanding the part about morals. As a whole this is a decent work but it is somewhat lacking in terms of content.

HUNG: I find the part about greed as human nature leaves something to desire with.

WONG: I agree.

CHEUK: I thought the execution was well done.

KWONG: We will now proceed to discuss *Press-Sure*.

CHEUK: It is a transparent and incredible piece of work.

CHOI: It felt like a breeze.

CHEUK: I am curious if the main character really plucked all the flowers from the tree.

KWONG: We will now proceed to discuss *Talk to Bear*.

CHENG: We have done our share of research and have confirmed that this was indeed made by two students from primary school although they did receive assistance from their teacher.

WONG: The two directors are now attending secondary school.

CHEUK: I am really impressed that two students under the age of 16 could make such an interesting film.

CHOI: The analogies about the bears and facebook are very creative.

CHEUK: Sure, I actually thought of an exact same concept before for a script.

CHOI: Unfortunately the ending of the story reminds me of promotional film made by the government.

WONG: I have some reservations about this work even though initially it gave me lots of surprises.

CHEUK: The students from primary school delivered a great performance.

KWONG: We will now proceed to discuss *Question Mark*.

HUNG: I find the voice-over affected.

CHOI: I am not sure if the audience could understand some of the jokes since they are related to the Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity.

- CHEUK: I consider this director a genuine talent and appreciate his sense of humor, which is lacking in other works.
- KWONG: We will proceed to discuss *Final Fantasy XVII*.
- WONG: I have to make it clear that this work is a project for my class. I am touched as it can be seen as a homey boy's monologue to his crush.
- HUNG: The background music is well-chosen.
- CHEUK: I agree.
- CHENG: This reflects the director's taste; it is very difficult to pick the right music.
- WONG: I do not like the way he used words for storytelling; the ending was a bit weak.
- CHEUK: I appreciate the ending and the surprises that it brings. In my view, a youth competition should give recognition to the work that offers the most surprises and the most creativity. When we offer an award to a particular work, we are sending out some kind of a statement, such as what we believe our society is lacking or something that we believe in. Without a doubt, *Final Fantasy XVII* shows great technique. But do we still need more of this type of Taiwanese music videos or camera commercials? This work does remind me of some of those commercials. The director is professional enough to make music videos, but should we still offer encouragement to this type of work?
- WONG: If one takes a closer look at it, in some scenes the actors' movements are perfectly in sync with the camera shot. That was quite something to behold and I consider that original.
- HUNG: My impression is that the director uses visual languages that we are familiar with to tell a different story.
- CHEUK: I admire the ambition of this director since he has submitted 3 works for this category and they are all different by nature. It is crucial for us to decide which one of his works deserves our recognition, since we would be making an important statement. I prefer the naughty and playful side of him, not the solid and conservative side of him.
- CHENG: After seeing 3 works by this director, I have to say he seems to be a narcissist even though all of his works are well-made.
- CHEUK: He always wants to turn the world upside down. His mental state reminds me of characters from Japanese comic book. There is something inside him that is ready to explode.
- CHENG: Yes, except he never screams and explodes. None of the 3 works has that moment of explosion. His editing is well-done; the music is excellent and he has a good sense of the visuals. The acting, however, is rather ordinary. The content of these 3 works are all very easy to digest: love, life and death and discontent with the system, but I can not say they are highly creative works.
- CHEUK: But if you compare his works with other finalists, I think his works in general fare better as a whole. And I genuinely admire his ambition.
- KWONG: We will now proceed to discuss *Accident*.

CHEUK: I really like this work, since it has the highest average in my view. It is solid from start to finish with surprises. Once again he is able to show the state of a Japanese comic. I appreciate his romanticism and that is also a quality that is rarely seen in other finalists.

HUNG: The ending does not seem very convincing.

CHEUNG: I think the director has great sense and technique. But for a short film, having beautiful words alone is not enough; it must have the visuals to complement those words.

WONG: I believe the director has this problem in all 3 of his works.

HUNG: Even though they all deal with different subject matters, the technique that the director employs is similar, such as the use of handheld shot.

CHEUNG: I am not a fan of *Final Fantasy XVII*. I admire this director and he shows great technique. If he is asked to shoot music videos now, he might do a better job than many of the professionals that we have in the industry now. But as a viewer, I have trouble immersing myself into this story. His shooting style does not seem to fit with the acting. The part in which the hero saves the beauty is very comic, but the latter part of the story is very heavy. It seems like the director does not really have a plan.

CHOI: Actually all 3 of his works do not seem to have a plan. Take *Accident* as an example, the story does not seem to have a clear course of progression and its structure is very loose.

CHEUK: His execution is very consistent though. The structure of *Accident* might be very loose, but its style of expression is very consistent, at least he does not try to be funny in the middle of the film.

WONG: I agree that the director does not have a clear plan, but I am still able to immerse into his world thanks to his romanticism.

CHEUNG: If I have to pick one of his works, I would choose *Accident* over the other 2 works.

CHEUK: I find *Accident* very romantic and I am able to immerse into his world.

KWONG: Great, we have finished our discussion of the 9 finalists. Could each of you nominate no more than 5 works for award consideration?

CHEUK: *Accident, The Ascension* and *Talk to Bear*.

HUNG: *Accident, Final Fantasy XVII* and *Talk to Bear*.

CHOI: *Accident, Final Fantasy XVII* and *Talk to Bear*.

CHEUNG: *Talk to Bear*.

WONG: *Final Fantasy XVII, The Ascension, Talk to Bear, The Love of Unforgettable* and *Addication*.

KWONG: We have selected 6 works for consideration and that means we will leave out the other 3 works. Could each of you nominate the recipient for the Gold Award?

HUNG: ***Talk to Bear*** and ***Final Fantasy XVII***.

CHEUK: ***Accident***.

WONG: ***Talk to Bear*** and ***Final Fantasy XVII***.

CHOI: ***Accident***.

CHENG: ***Talk to Bear***.

KWONG: Since we do not have a clear consensus, we will continue our discussion of these nominees.

CHEUK: I genuinely enjoy the 10 minutes of watching ***Accident***, because I am able to appreciate the story as well as the image separately. It reminds me of the Japanese film Confessions. I like all 3 films that this director has submitted and admire his romanticism, sense of humor and playfulness. ***Accident*** stands out amongst these 3 works. For Silver Award, I would nominate ***The Ascension***. As a viewer, I truly enjoy the few minutes of watching it and its rhythm. I believe the rhythm of a film comes naturally and it is very precious. Its visuals are very rich as well.

CHOI: I have to confess that I know the director of ***Accident*** personally. In my view a youth competition should offer encouragement to young people's willfulness. Other finalists have their shortcomings; for instance, ***Talk to Bear*** appears to convey an adult's message perhaps under the influence of the teacher. I do not see any reason why we should encourage this form of insincerity. I prefer young people to be sincere and willful.

HUNG: I find ***Accident*** somewhat pretentious and find it easier to immerse myself into ***Final Fantasy XVII***, for I could see a more authentic character in this work. My problem with ***Accident*** is that even if I do not see its graphics, I am sure I would be to follow the film as well.

CHEUK: I have to admit the voice-over of ***Accident*** is very lousy. It is sometimes too fast and sometimes too slow; some of the images can not follow the voiceover.

HUNG: I am touched by ***Talk to Bear***, for it is a quality work made by primary school students and that is very rare.

CHEUK: I feel that if those two primary school students are indeed genius, we should not offer them the award. So they will always remember that being old-fashioned does not get them very far. (All laughed)

CHOI: I do not think we should encourage the young kids to think and to act like an adult.

CHENG: I enjoy watching 90% of ***Talk to Bear***. This group of children delivered a great performance that is even better than many adults. ***Accident*** and ***Final Fantasy XVII*** both have very similar openings and endings, and the final message do not offer me any surprise. ***Talk to Bear***, in contrast, manages to offer me surprises with its message in a simple and straightforward manner. Many directors have great technique but what we lack the most is a genuine storyteller and that deserves our encouragement.

WONG: It is very difficult for me to decide between *Final Fantasy XVII* and *Talk to Bear*.

CHOI: I have never been opposed to films with voice-over such as *Accident* whereas I do not have a strong impression of *Final Fantasy XVII*. *The Ascension* is decent and entertaining as a whole but lacks surprises.

CHENG: *The Ascension* is the only film with special sound effects; all the other finalists just use live sound. I believe that is a plus point for *The Ascension*.

CHOI: I have to say if this is the Hong Kong Film Awards, we should use more professional criteria to judge these films. Since this is a youth competition, I would suggest we focus more on the uniqueness of these young people's thoughts.

KWONG: Since we do not have a clear consensus, I would suggest we have a vote on the award arrangement: 2 Gold, 2 Silver and 1 Gold 1 Silver.

(Each juror can only cast ONE vote on award arrangement and the works that should be considered)

Award		Juror	
2 Gold	<i>Accident</i> and <i>Talk to Bear</i>		
	<i>Talk to Bear</i> and <i>Final Fantasy XVII</i>	WONG	
2 Silver	<i>Talk to Bear</i> and <i>Final Fantasy XVII</i>		
	<i>Accident</i> and <i>The Ascension</i>		
	<i>Accident</i> and <i>Talk to Bear</i>		
1 Gold 1 Silver	(G) <i>Accident</i>	(S) <i>The Ascension</i>	CHEUK
	(G) <i>Accident</i>	(S) <i>Talk to Bear</i>	CHOI
	(G) <i>Final Fantasy XVII</i>	(S) <i>Talk to Bear</i>	HUNG
	(G) <i>Talk to Bear</i>	(S) <i>The Ascension</i>	CHENG

(Since there is still no consensus, the jurors are asked to veto the arrangement that they oppose. CHEUK Wan-Chi and Clement CHENG veto the 2 gold arrangement of *Talk to Bear* and *Final Fantasy XVII*. Ger CHOI, Adam WONG and Kit HUNG veto the 1 Gold 1 Silver arrangement of *Talk to Bear* and *The Ascension*.

KWONG: Now we have only 3 options left, please cast your vote again.

Award		Juror	
1 Gold 1 Silver	(G) <i>Accident</i>	(S) <i>The Ascension</i>	CHEUK
	(G) <i>Accident</i>	(S) <i>Talk to Bear</i>	CHENG CHOI
	(G) <i>Final Fantasy XVII</i>	(S) <i>Talk to Bear</i>	WONG HUNG

(There are two arrangements with 2 votes and in the end CHEUK Wan-chi votes in favor of the arrangement that gives the Gold award to *Accident* and the Silver award to *Talk to Bear*.

KWONG: So the Gold award goes to *Accident* and the Silver award goes to *Talk to Bear*.

ALL: *The Ascension* and *Final Fantasy XVII*.

CHEUK: I very much enjoy the rhythm of *The Ascension*.

WONG: It deserves to receive the award for best rhythm.

CHEUK: **The Ascension** reminds me of Daniel Wu. The colour and the way of presentation look very similar. The acting in **The Love of Unforgettable** and the editing of **Future** also deserve our compliments.

WONG: Sure, the acting in **The Love of Unforgettable** is excellent. The final Special Mention could go to this work.

KWONG: For this category, the Gold award goes to **Accident**, Silver award goes to **Talk to Bear**, Special Mention go to **The Ascension**, **Final Fantasy XVII** and **The Love of Unforgettable**.

Youth Category

Gold Award

Accident

SZETO Wing-yin, CHENG Chi-hong, LI Yui-hon

Silver Award

Talk to Bear

TSE Cheuk-fung, POON Lok-wan

Special Mention

The Ascension

Stanley LEUNG, Gershon SNG, Matthew TUNG, William HALL-JONES

Final Fantasy XVII

SZETO Wing-yin

The Love of Unforgettable

LAI Ka-ho, LEE Sze-long, Katherine SO Cheuk-nam, LIN Hung-hing, LOK Chui-lun, TANG Yuen-ying