

17th ifva Interactive Media Category Jury Meeting Minutes

Jurors in Attendance: Bryan Chung Wai-ching (CHUNG), Dr Lars Nittve (NITTVE), Ng Tsz-Kwan(NG),
Dr Sarah Kenderine (KENDERDINE), Ip Yuk-yiu (IP).

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

- KWONG: We received around 30 works for the interactive media category this year. Last December, Sarah, Bryan and Kwan went through all the entries and selected the 10 finalists. The focus of this competition is creativity and independent spirit. This category was founded 7 years ago and this year we are going to have 4 awards: Gold Award, Silver Award, Honorary Mention and Best Concept. We can begin by discussing **Pixel Bite**.
- NITTVE: When I read about its proposal, it sounds interesting but its execution is not convincing at all. I did not get overly enthusiastic.
- KENDERDINE: There were a lot of people gathered around as the lady was speaking about it but I could not understand what she was saying. Does it sound more convincing to you guys?
- IP: To be fair, I think originally there should be a 3-D printer that can print out pixels but she could not get the 3-D printer to function fully. I do like the work but I think its execution does not do justice to the proposal. It would be great if she could build a box and hide herself inside and cook the pixels. It would be perhaps more convincing rather than to see someone cooking the pixels in its current form.
- KENDERDINE: So you think it is too literal?
- CHUNG: I think she could have packaged her work in a more convincing way. Her cooking the pixels there seems a bit detached from the original idea that you want to automate everything. Her presence disrupts this idea a little bit.
- NITTVE: I think it had to be more stringent in terms of presentation. The execution was a little loose. It is not serious enough or it is not funny enough; it is semi-funny or cute. It is a good idea that was lost along the way.
- CHUNG: There seems to be two versions of this work. The proposal was more virtual, online and automatic whereas the actual work was more participative by nature.
- KENDERDINE: Its success depends on the community that it builds around that adopts pixels, if it lacks that social input it would not work.
- NG: When I saw the proposal, I was curious to see what kind of inventions the artists could come up. But the end product was rather literal as the pixel was the food. I was expecting something more than that.
- KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss **Jsut Code**.

KENDERDINE: Technically it is perfect, it really works. I enjoy the introduction of the real time component as opposed to the curated component. That is a nice mix up. Life and death is okay because these words have so many meanings. And they come through how ludicrously people take life and death in their everyday tweets. It is very humorous and I enjoy it a lot.

NITTVE: Me too. Good work.

CHUNG: I just observed and did not use my phone to play around with it. I used the artist's phone to try a few of them and it worked perfectly. I noticed most viewers took picture of the barcode; they enjoyed photo-taking more than the actual encryption and decoding. I am not sure why that was the case.

NG: I think most viewers see this as a performance.

CHUNG: I do not see a lot of incentive to decode the message or to see what others think of the codes. I would expect the work to provide more incentive to engage the viewers to decode or to investigate. Based on my observation it seemed rather decorative.

KENDERDINE: I think that the desire to have photos taken depends on the backdrop. Some installations are just more conducive to photo taking.

NITTVE: When you have that program up, your camera can choose either scanning or taking photos. I got interested by all these ludicrous messages about death.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss *Reflection*.

IP: I think the concept is too literal and technically a little bit too simple. I saw it in its previous form staged in Victoria prison. I did not see much differences and development in the current version. The documentation of the statement is interesting though.

KENDERDINE: I was surprised by how weak it was in isolation. Shadow has been used a lot in media art.

NITTVE: Delay has been used a lot in media art as well. The corner installation does not help because the movements are limited.

IP: I think with more site specific setting it would have helped. When the work was staged at the prison, it felt like a carnival. It killed the seriousness of the work. It is not the artist's fault but this time it does not make much sense to put the work in the art center.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss *Suits Uncool*.

NITTVE: Of course the suit is not my size so I could not try it on. In a sense you have to believe that it works the way as it describes rather than to experience it. You could touch the shoulder and get a sound from it. Since you are asked to believe that it works, that comes across as a weakness. Otherwise the idea is pretty cool.

IP: I agree that the work would have worked better if it has a performative element. I trust the artist that the suit is working fine but I feel just demonstrating an object is not enough. The relational aesthetic is missing. Like if you touch someone or bump into someone, something happens. It would be better if someone wears the suit and asks people to touch it.

KENDERDINE: Or you are invited to put it on and go around.

NITTVÉ: It says so on the sign to put it on but that is not the case.

CHUNG: I do expect the artist to wear the suit and to do the demonstration of hugging.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss ***Behind the Camera, who are you?***

KENDERDINE: I watched lots of people using it, which I hope was good. They had three camera sessions. I think the database is quite big. I feel that the strength of this work is partly by understanding why she did it and the video at the back helps enormously in making it a powerful political statement, about the despot directors.

NITTVÉ: That was something that I missed obviously.

KENDERDINE: There was an interview with her done about why she did this work. She used to work in the movies and watched many directors torturing their actors. She gave an example of a young child used as a young actor; he was supposed to have a red face and got slapped in the face continuously. The whole experience was quite traumatic for her. Whether that makes the work stand out is debatable because I see both sides of it. I quite enjoy it even though the technical implementation is really modest. She had to work with what she had available.

NG: I find this a work of documentation, expanding the documentation of making a movie and turning it into a piece of media art. I am not too comfortable with that.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss ***Squiggle***.

KENDERDINE: We are living in this world of nostalgia. It seems like dressing up technology to look like something else.

NITTVÉ: These pieces that you can create could look like 1920s or 1930s abstractions. The odd thing is when you go to museums or art dealers, you always see these much older frame that make them look more valuable or historical. It has to do with dressing up old modernity. Overall I like it because it works; it is intuitive and it looks good. I am not sure about the frames because it was too tongue in cheek.

KENDERDINE: You could buy the application online and the frame is irrelevant.

CHUNG: I just ignore the frame because it is an iphone/ipad application, so I just focus my experience of using the application. To me it is an interface that works perfectly. I was expecting to get more from this framework as right now you can only get sound from drawing. It could generate more publicity and attention if it is connected to social media sites.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss ***Time Axis***.

NG: After seeing the actual work, I found it bigger than expected but the sound was somewhat disappointing. It worked well when I tried it but the effects were not as strong, since the thermal image did not stay very long.

IP: The artist did mention that the temperature at the gallery was a little too low for her piece to work properly.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss *Unreserved: Karaoke as Choir*.

KENDERDINE: I still have a query about the relevancy of taking it back into the street for the man who is used as the center of the work. I find it a little odd. But everyone was enjoying it and everyone loves karaoke; it has that popular appeal. I am interested in the end point when it gets back onto the street and how interesting that is.

CHUNG: I do not like the enclosed area, the singing box. I was expecting them to sing in more open area such as Mongkok, so more people could sing along and make the experience more engaging. After seeing the work, I also have a doubt whether there is a point to bring the work back to the original singer.

NITTVE: But this box is part of the original intention, your isolation in the collective. You are producing something that is collective but you are alone when you do it. That is very intentional and a core of the piece.

KENDERDINE: Do you think that is an analogy of the man?

NITTVE: I thought so and that is the way I understand it.

IP: I think the project is interesting in terms of its social concern. The piece in its current form might be a bit too simple. I just want one more element to make the piece more complete. For example, it would be nice to come up with a file or a CD that could be made available to the public. The original intention is really interesting but something is lacking. I do like the box and the analogy of loneliness.

NITTVE: I agree with your point and that could add some complexity to this piece.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss *Magnetphonic*.

NITTVE: Unimpressive.

KENDERDINE: Some of my colleagues tried to convince me about it. We read the proposal and I gave it quite poor marks. The actual work is better than the proposal but still unimpressive. It is a bit of a science experiment.

NITTVE: It does so little and it does nothing that you cannot just think. You do not have to experience it, nothing happens to the experience to me.

CHUNG: To me the setup is better than the proposal suggested but the interaction of the sound and graphics generated by the magnetic force is too simple.

KWONG: Let's proceed to discuss *Lawnmap Hong Kong*.

KENDERDINE: It is a curveball; it is social media and the question is whether this is art with the discussion about if life is art. I think it is a nice work from the social media point of view but it does not really hold up as an exhibition statement.

NITTVE: I agree. I definitely want to encourage the use of green lawns in Hong Kong. This work is challenging the authority to doing it and that is interesting, but it does not necessarily make it great art.

KWONG: Could you please each nominate 3-4 works for award consideration?

NG: My nominated works are: ***Jsut Code***, ***Time Axis*** and ***Karaoke***.

KENDERDINE: My nominated works are: ***Jsut Code***, ***Squiggle*** and ***Karaoke***.

IP: My nominated works are ***Pixel Bite*** and ***Karaoke***.

NITTVE: My nominated works are ***Jsut Code***, ***Squiggle*** and ***Karaoke***.

CHUNG: My nominated works are ***Time Axis***, ***Karaoke*** and ***Lawnmap Hong Kong***.

KWONG: We have nominated 6 works and can we leave out the 4 other works for award consideration?

All: Yes.

NITTVE: Perhaps we could rate each work (in the scale of 1-3, 3 for the best, 2 for the second best and so forth) and tally the total for each nominated work?

KWONG: Sure.

KENDERDINE: I would give 3 to ***Jsut Code***, 2 to ***Squiggle*** and 1 to ***Karaoke***.

NG: I would give 3 to ***Jsut Code***, 2 to ***Karaoke*** and 1 to ***Time Axis***.

CHUNG: I would give 3 to ***Karaoke***, 2 to ***Time Axis*** and 1 to ***Lawnmap***.

NITTVE: I would give 3 to ***Jsut Code***, 2 to ***Squiggle*** and 1 to ***Karaoke***.

IP: I would just give 3 to ***Karaoke***

KWONG: The tally is as follows, ***Karaoke*** 10, ***Jsut Code*** 9, ***Squiggle*** 4, ***Time Axis*** 3, and ***Lawnmap*** 1.

IP: Does everyone agree that we should only have 1 Gold Award recipient?

NITTVE: Now could everyone please nominate 1 work only for Gold Award?

IP: I would vote for ***Karaoke***.

CHUNG: I would vote for ***Karaoke***.

NG: I change my mind and would vote for ***Karaoke***.

NITTVE: I would vote for ***Jsut Code***.

KENDERDINE: I would vote for **Jsut Code**.

KWONG: So that is 3-2 and that takes care of the Gold and Silver Award. The Gold Award goes to **Karaoke** and the Silver Award goes to **Jsut Code**. Now let's discuss the recipient for Special Mention.

KENDERDINE: I nominate **Squiggle**.

IP: I nominate **Time Axis**.

CHUNG: I nominate **Time Axis**.

NITTVÉ: I nominate **Squiggle**.

NG: I nominate **Time Axis**.

IP: We can still discuss since I originally nominated **Pixel Bite**. But if I have to choose between **Squiggle** and **Time Axis**, I would choose **Time Axis** because **Squiggle** is too much like a generic application to me. It works well but does not give me any artistic or poetic experience; it is more like a creative toy to me. Even as an application it is not outrageously interesting; it is more of an advanced exercise of programming. I want something more from the artistic side. It is well made and well programmed but does not really give me genuine artistic experience.

NITTVÉ: Does **Time Axis** give you a sincere and genuine artistic experience?

IP: I think the artist did make an attempt.

NITTVÉ: My problem with **Time Axis** was that it was clunky and it was too small to have any kind of magic. The physical arrangement was not well-functioning and looked like very homemade. It was a nice thought but the execution was not satisfying. **Squiggle** could have been much more complex but at the same time it does work.

KENDERDINE: I think **Squiggle** is an interesting piece of work, for it is the only commercial work amongst the 10 finalists.

IP: Based on my past experience with ifva, I have problems with the term Special Mention this year as it should go to the work that might not be as complete and outstanding overall but has something special that really stand out and deserves specific mention and encouragement from ifva. To me **Squiggle** and **Time Axis** are both good but do not fit that description.

NITTVÉ: Would it work better if we call it Honorary Mention?

IP: Yes, that would be wonderful.

KWONG: Even though it is not written in the regulation, we are open to renaming the award.

IP: Perhaps we could have a vote and decide this?

NG: I suggest we stick to Special Mention.

NITTVÉ: I am not passionate with either direction; therefore I would go with the one that would give you guys less trouble. So I would go with Special Mention.

KENDERDINE: I totally appreciate this idea and think this could add drama to the event so I would go with Honorary Mention.

CHUNG: I prefer Honorary Mention as well.

IP: I would go with Honorary Mention.

KWONG: So we will have 2 recipients for Honorary Mention, **Squiggle** and **Time Axis**. We should now discuss the recipient for Best Concept and there are only two works for consideration, **Pixel Bite** and **Karaoke**.

NITTVÉ: Since **Karaoke** is the recipient of the Gold Award, it is naturally superior to **Pixel Bite**.

KENDERDINE: I agree with that.

KWONG: So that wraps up all the awards for this category. The Gold Award and Best Concept go to **Karaoke**. Silver Award goes to **Jsut Code**. The two Honorary Mentions go to **Squiggle** and **Time Axis**.

Interactive Media Category

Gold Award

Unreserved: Karaoke as Choir
WONG Yu-hin, LAM Chi-fai

Silver Award

Jsut Code
Winnie SOON, Helen PRITCHARD

Honorary Mention

Squiggle
Henry CHU

Time Axis
LAM Miu-ling

Best Concept

Unreserved: Karaoke as Choir
WONG Yu-hin, LAM Chi-fai