

**The 27th ifva Awards  
Youth Category Jury Meeting Transcript**

Jury Members: Adam Wong (Wong), Lo Chun-yip (Lo), Kenny Leung (Leung), Yoyo Sham (Sham), Tim Lui (Lui)

Organizer representative: Kattie Fan (Fan), Sandy Lai, Jessica Law, Helen Lam

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Fan: Today, our goal is to select a Gold, Silver award winner and 3 Special Mentions among the 10 finalist works. Because Youth Category entrants need more encouragement, therefore we will give out 3 Special Mention Awards. The Gold award winner will receive HK\$3,000 and a MacBook Pro worth HK\$21,999, Silver Award winner will get HK\$2,000, while the Special Mention winners will receive certificates.

Sham: Youth category participants are under 18 years old?

Fan: Yes. The extent to which teachers and adults can assist will be determined annually based on jurors' views. It is usual for young entrants to receive assistance from adults, but whether their participation interferes with or overrides the participants' creation, we will discuss further. At present, we require that all creative team members must be under the age of 18. Of course, it is acceptable for teachers to serve as consultants, and adults can be actors or part of the crew.

Sham: It is a great honor to be the juror of the youth category. This is my first time participating. I want to know who this competition wants to encourage and the benchmarks for judging the works.

Fan: We focus more on the independent spirit, creativity, originality of each work, and whether it expresses personal ideas. As for technology and production value, we have higher requirements for other categories, such as the Open or the Asian New Force categories, because many of the filmmakers in these categories are more mature or experienced. For the Youth category, we consider the artist's ability to express ideas through their works. Maybe some works will have more flaws in production, it depends on the jury members whether these flaws are acceptable.

Wong: What is the standard of the works that were excluded from finalists?

Leung: During the preliminary round, there were works that were more mature in terms of technique, but when selecting the finalists, we included some works that had imperfect technique but were sincere and worth encouraging.

Fan: You can share your views on each work first. The first work is *The Endless Fate*.

Lo: It's not easy to shoot a work of this length at his age, but it was hard for me to suspend my disbelief when watching it. Even though the entrants are millennials, they used a lesser-known nostalgic element, Danny Chan, but the plot development did not resonate with me too much. The work as a whole is well handled and complete, especially the part on the taxi, and uses mistaken identities and coincidences.

Wong: I felt very moved when I watched it. In addition, I noticed a special phenomenon, there has been a wave of nostalgia in the past few years. Even though they lack personal experience of the former period, many young people yearn for the good old days. I also recognize this sentiment in this work although I agree that the Danny Chan element is not expressed very well. However, as much as possible, the director expresses a certain feeling for the present era and a yearning for the past. The handling of emotions in this work is not like many contemporary works, such as the friendship between boys or the romance between boys and girls, and this really touched me. The film language adopts traditional narrative methods, and without much resources, there will naturally be some flaws. The character design and storylines are a bit confusing, but I notice the use of certain techniques such as the ending echoing the beginning. The use of the taxi prologue subtly expresses contemporary situations, which is good, but the connection to the next scene in the school is a bit abrupt.

In addition, it is not certain whether the taxi scene in the opening scene is set in the future post-epidemic era because the girl is not wearing a mask. But in another scene in the taxi, the male protagonist also does not wear a mask, and I feel that the connection between the scenes is not very precise.

Sham: The nostalgic feeling is very deliberate. The work does not explain why these young students feel nostalgic about the past, which I find a bit unconvincing. I agree that the work is very complete, and that the end echoes the beginning, but many of the elements are too direct and unnatural. The blackout in one of the scenes is too long and meaningless. Without the continuation of the background music, people might mistakenly think that the film has ended. The overall story is smooth and the technical handling is not bad.

Leung: I have the same question about the nostalgic element, but I agree with Sau-ping (Wong). The main storyline is about the male and female lead who both love Danny Chan and old Hong Kong, which is the same feeling that many young people nowadays have. Even though the two things do not seem to be related, I take it that the work portrays contemporary situations through popular culture and interests. Of course, there is room for discussion whether this kind of emotion between old Hong Kong and new Hong Kong is accurately represented in this work.

I agree that the work is complete and smooth, the only thing is that the dialogue of the characters could have been written better, such as the dialogue between the boys discussing emotional feelings.

Lui: I also think the work is complete. Although it was filmed in school, it uses many different locations, and the camera positionings are well thought-out. I don't think

the nostalgic element is very obtrusive. I believe that today's young people will explore things that they are interested in and even incorporate them into their lifestyles. This is an attitude or style. In the introduction of the production team, I learned that with the conclusion of their secondary school career, many of them have left Hong Kong. The work reflects the pain of parting, and the work is full of strong feelings for their school environment and Hong Kong. The handling of the work is very mature for their age.

Fan: The second work is *Dear Pandemic*.

Leung: There are many technical problems with the work, such as mixing, audio recording, etc., but still has some parts to recommend. It captures the troubles and concerns of secondary school students under the epidemic, such as their worries about exams, the alienation of friends who can only use Zoom for classes. The sincerity of their emotional expressions really touched me. The message at the end of the film, like "cherish the people in your life", is a bit clichéd.

The flaws in the work are more obvious, like the actor who plays the father, the sound problems, etc.

Sham: The ending is not bad, in which you can see the photos of students they took in real life, but the first part is rather lengthy. The actor's performance makes it difficult for me to get into the film, and the performance only becomes more natural towards the end. Perhaps shooting in a documentary style would make it easier for me to identify with this subject.

Lui: I think the beginning and end of the work are handled in an educational TV style, but the middle part is not bad. Shooting in that room makes it easier to enter the world of the female lead, and some parts give a feeling of shooting a music video. It is interesting to show the photos of the students at the end, but adding those words of encouragement and narration makes it preachy and alienates the audience.

Wong: The messages of encouragement at the end are relatively bad. I quite like the design of inserting segments of parents at the beginning and the end, and the takeaway scene at the end is the most authentic and natural part of the whole film. It's a good idea to start with the parents at the beginning, but it's better to avoid close-up shots. The plot of the female lead taking Zoom classes in her room reflects the reality of their lives.

Lo: The female lead's performance is quite natural, but the other characters don't seem to be in the same world, which reduces the dramatic effect and is a pity. But overall it is more mature than the works about the epidemic last year.

Sham: It'd be better to add more Zoom scenes or scenes of friends texting each other.

Fan: The next one is *In Pursuit of Friendship*.

Sham: I like this work very much, the male lead who wears glasses is very natural. There are some technical problems with the lighting and exposure, and also sound

recording, but other scenes including the station, playing basketball, and the ending shot are not bad, and you can understand the emotional turmoil and the fates of the characters.

- Lo: I also like this work, especially the low-key and subtly rich texture of boy's love, and the complex feelings of whether to admit their feelings for one another. Of course, there are shortcomings in the technical aspect, but the camerawork is sensitive. The birthday celebration scene uses a long two-shot, thus conveying the feelings between the protagonists. I really like it and can feel the emotional interaction of these characters who want to get close but can't.
- Wong: I think the overall performance is very embarrassing. The technical and visual aspects of the film cannot adequately convey the emotions, and this inadequacy makes it difficult for me to fall into the story.
- Leung: I wasn't able to get into the drama either. The interaction between actors is a bit embarrassing, which is perhaps the subtle feeling that Lo mentioned. But I agree that the use of the station for the beginning and ending scene, the camerawork and the plot are mature. In fact, there is not much problem with the flow of the whole story, but the actors' performances and emotional expressions are a little insufficient.
- Lui: I think the director's choice of scenes is appropriate, but I also feel that the two actors are a little unnatural. Perhaps because they are amateurs, their body language is not natural. The use of two-shots for the birthday cake scene is very brave, but unfortunately the dialogue and pace in the middle of the film are slightly inferior, otherwise the film could be better.
- Fan: The next one is *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*.
- Lo: I really like the cinematography and rhythm in film editing of this work. The in and out are well done. For example, after a blackout shot, there's a shot of the male protagonist looking out of the window in the metro, instead of showing the whole action of turning his head and looking back. This shot is quite powerful. There is a unique sense of awkwardness in the editing, which greatly adds to the rhythm of the film. At the same time, many lines of dialogue in the film are full of realism. The camerawork is also very good. For example, the scene of the male protagonist carrying the suitcase is very clean, without using too many shots. The entire film uses the visual diary method, and the treatment of the material is good.
- Leung: The camerawork does not directly highlight the subject. For example, in the scene of two people dragging their suitcases on the road, you will be naturally drawn to them. This kind of arrangement is very successful. In addition, the work is a bit similar to the work, *Brown Flowers*, *Yellow Leaves* which we will discuss later. The latter is auteur led, while this one uses dialogue between the two characters to express its ideas. The dialogue leaves room to the imagination, and is poetical. The work does not express emotions in an obvious way, but conveys them through scenes and poetic dialogue.

- Wong: The work does not use traditional storytelling techniques, but employs lyrical and plot-advancing dialogue to complement the development of the story. However, I think the abruptness of the work is due to the inaccurate execution of filming. For example, the long pauses of the still image in the catalogue are very strange, and there is a lack of precision in the camerawork and other techniques. The final scene conveys the message of sunshine after the rain, but the director chooses to focus his camera on some bricks, which is puzzling. In addition, the collision of the ambient sound mixing is also problematic.
- Lui: I think the dialogue of the characters and the use of camera shots are very experimental, but the work fails to achieve the appropriate rhythm.
- Sham: I couldn't take in this work at first. Although the shooting style is unique, the content is intriguing. The sound affected my concentration, there was a lot of rustling sound. The work is complete, it would be better if the sound is as good as the visuals. Overall, the work has potential, but many elements are still rough.
- Fan: The next one is *Hide and Seek*.
- Sham: I like this work very much. Although the performance of the two actors could be better, the way the story was told allowed me to get into the story right away and to feel the emotions expressed as the plot unfolded. From the audience's point of view, I think this eight-minute film is a success. The theme is quite special, with the mentioning of SARS from many years ago, which brings up many memories of that period.
- Wong: I agree that the technique of the work successfully drives the atmosphere and development of the story. Using the pandemic as the theme, I thought at first the film would be very heavy, but the scene of the student playing hide-and-seek with the school staff in the middle, along with the music, gave me an unexpected feeling, and it was the first turning point of the film. The janitor recalls her son's death from SARS in 2003 was the second unexpected twist. However, the work lacks a core of view, and fails to stick to the main theme with all the twists and turns, but only uses the pandemic to tell a story. The costume design can be a little more well-thought-out, I didn't recognize the janitor at first.
- Lui: This is the only work that talks about SARS in addition to COVID, which is a very smart approach. Although the middle part is interesting and playful, it mixes well with the sadness towards the end, and it is enjoyable to watch. I don't think the plot twists are forced. For young people, the current epidemic is a personal experience, while SARS happened a long time ago. Although I can't quite understand the communication problem between the two generations that the director wants to show, the work expresses the scars left upon Hong Kong people during the two pandemics. Such contrast is quite good. The whole story is also very complete.
- Leung: I agree that this work looks at the theme of the pandemic from a different perspective. I don't really think the plot twist was forced as well. The work fully describes an experience and the interaction of the two protagonists, but lacks sufficient

interpretation from the artist. The ending plot could have more play to express the director's concerns for this theme. It is a pity by just ending it with the mother looking at the photo in the park and then the camera slowly tilting up. Perhaps as Tim (Lui) said, it is to bring out the scars on Hong Kong people during the two pandemics, but for me, the audience's interpretation of the story should be based on the starting point of the work. If the creator wants to express the scars of the pandemic, there needs to be more emphasis in storytelling. Another example is that the director's statement claims they are using the work to express generation gap, but it feels that viewers understand this theme differently, which also shows that the message of the film is not communicated in an obvious and profound way.

Wong: Actually, when I watched the film, I didn't feel that the plot twist was forced or artificial. On the contrary, as Kenny (Leung) said, the relationship between the two protagonists is a little vague and the characters lack psychological depth, which caused this feeling of coincidence. If the work compares the inner pain of the student and the janitor's past, the theme will be clearer.

Fan: The next work is *Disregulation*.

Wong: I like this work very much. After watching many works of young people, I found that many secondary school students like to make films on the theme of what I call "School Purgatory", about homework and exam pressure. *Disregulation* represents a more contemporary evolution of this genre, and I'm glad this type of film continues this theme. The motivation behind the work also touched me.

Sham: This work is like a secondary school student version of *Black Mirror*. The monologue and acting skills of the first scene are very good; the black and white visuals don't look pretentious and even improve the film. I appreciate that the director has the courage to shoot in this style, and the music is also well-chosen. The only thing is that the length of the film can be shortened a little because the film starts to repeat itself in the latter part, but in general, the content is rich. The work uses dialogue to explain the plot. As I watched it, I looked forward to the development of the story, like what would happen to the student wearing glasses after he goes to the rooftop.

Lui: I will also describe this work as awesome. I believe everyone has the same opinion.

Wong: I am very happy that the school is willing to provide locations for the students to shoot.

Lo: I don't have much opinion about this work because it's really well done. I believe that it is not easy for secondary school students to handle this subject. They need to think about a lot of things, about what constitutes "power", and put everything into a 22-minute video. However, I also feel that the film is too long, especially in the middle when the director makes use of parallel editing, which is a dangerous act. In addition, the work brings up the "panopticon" concept of power, which is used until the end. The characters are in a state of mutual monitoring, checks and balances, and imprisonment. The director must apply these concepts throughout the script,

otherwise it will easily become too dramatic. The middle and ending sections are a bit repetitive. Since the ending is all about breaking through the predicament, there is no need to repeat too much.

Leung: I want to add that I really like all the characters wearing face masks and just showing their eyes. Under the epidemic, whether or not to wear face masks during shooting is an issue that every creator needs to deal with. All the characters in the film wear face masks with only their eyes disclosed, and so audiences cannot see their expressions under the masks. This approach fits the plot, and not only makes the atmosphere gloomier, the behavior of the students also appears more consistent. This expression is very reasonable and clever.

Fan: The next work is *Nightmare*.

Sham: I don't watch horror movies. Of course, the director presents a very stereotyped image of ghosts: red clothes, bare feet, and masks. As a horror film, I think this work is a success. I assume that the film employs certain metaphors, maybe the male protagonist did not kill anyone and that the girl may have committed suicide, the corpse may symbolize an emotion, etc. Otherwise, it's a complete horror movie.

Leung: I also think the work is a success, telling a complete horror story with some stereotypical elements in three minutes. Certain camera movements and music create a terrifying atmosphere, and the story itself is reasonable. The frightening aspect is not due to direct sensory stimulation. For example, when the male protagonist sits down, the mirror behind him shows the face of the female ghost. This kind of low-key horror, coupled with the fact that this horror film was done by a student makes it quite successful. This is also the reason why the work can become one of the 10 finalist works.

Wong: The work does not have any big messages to convey. It feels like a young person who is into horror films has made a short film in a genre she likes in a diligent and attentive way. Although it's not very creative, I can feel that the director has really studied the techniques and feelings of horror films, which she puts to use in an effective manner.

Fan: We really rarely receive ghost or horror film entries.

Lui: Horror films are hard to make and create the appropriate atmosphere.

Sham: Is this a competent horror film?

Wong: If the film does not have any message to convey and is simply a horror film, I should analyze its handling. To critique whether it is a competent work. I would say that the filmmaker has some creative abilities, but the film still has many flaws. Even if you just want to present horror using film techniques, you can still be creative. The filmmaker is just trying to learn and apply certain elements and genre conventions that she has seen in horror movies. She does capture some of the spirit of such films with the lighting and scenes, but overall, it's not very creative.

- Fan: The next work is *Brown Flowers, Yellow Leaves*.
- Wong: I have a question, does the creator really have colour vision deficiency? It is quite a crucial point in evaluating this work.
- Sham: I also have the same question.
- Lo: My impression is that the director does not necessarily have colour vision deficiency, but tries to explore this realm. However, the failure of the work is that the subject needs to be presented visually, but the director relies too much on oral presentation. Visually, you can say the work tries to be creative, but the narration is not creative at all, and everything is explained in a straightforward way, which is a pity.
- Wong: The whole work only presents one idea. It feels unremarkable and unconvincing.
- Sham: I think it would be good if it were a piece of writing. I quite like the text, especially the ending part where she describes the blue sky, very encouraging. But I don't think she makes good use of the film medium. The work could have been presented as a photo or an article. As a short film, it is too flat. It feels like listening to a text with a lot of visuals. Compared with other works, I feel that the work is not too complete.
- Fan: The next work is *Relinquished*.
- Sham: I think this work is from Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity. I gave a lot of extra points because of the male actor. Overall, every aspect of the work is well considered. It is an ambitious work. When I read the catalogue again, I realized that there is no dialogue in the film, which I didn't notice when I first watched it. Although the story is not too eventful, the artistic conception, art direction, camerawork, lighting and dance are all very good. Some sections could be shortened a bit, such as the scene where the female lead looks up at the sky. Not using dialogue to convey emotions is quite amazing.
- Wong: This is a very complete work. I also quickly guessed that it is from the School of Creativity. The technique and aesthetics are outstanding, which are expressed very strongly and naturally. Even though its narration is not difficult, the grasp of story development, artistic conception and emotional ideas is solid and all aspects are well done. There is no big message to convey, but simply portrays a nice-looking visual journey. The acting is natural, and because the plot is not too complicated, the actors simply convey the feeling of being relinquished. All these are achieved because of the deep-rooted aesthetics of the directors. The only technical criticism is that in the doll clawing machine scene, it lacks a shot of the doll being captured, which I think is very important.
- Lo: Over the past few years, whenever I saw works from Shau Kee, they were always beautifully made. This year, I appreciate their aesthetics and talent. One can easily see the hard work behind this work, with its art direction and lighting effects, which are even better than the works of previous years. I also agree that the male actor adds



a lot to the film, and it is rare to see an actor in the Youth category whose performance is so convincing. His emotional expression, physical condition and gender exploration are very convincing, which is what I like most about this work. The scene in which he walks down the stairs slowly near the road is emotionally moving. In the shot with the bus passing by behind him, the creators incorporate the tactile feelings about the city and broaden their inner feelings.

Lui: As an audience, the only thing I feel dissatisfied with is that I hope to know the message expressed in this work. I can understand that relinquishing is a conscious act, expressing pursuit and desire, but the scene of the actor on the beach at the end is confusing. I can't fully understand what the director wants to express or what their concerns are, which makes it hard for me to get into the work. In contrast, *Disregulation* is not just excellent, but gives me something to think about.

Sham: I'd put *Relinquished* alongside *Brown Flowers, Yellow Leaves*. With the latter, you can easily understand the director's message, but *Relinquished* uses film language to express its ideas, giving people room for imagination, and the aesthetics are also very beautiful. *Brown Flowers, Yellow Leaves* uses only words. In a short film competition, I am rather appreciative of *Relinquished* on using actors and lighting to tell a story.

Fan: The last work is *The Living Sea*.

Sham: I would like to know why this work was chosen as one of the finalists. It's a completely different type of film.

Lui: During the preliminary selection, we appreciated that this director made a documentary. Of course, it may not be able to reach the standard of what a documentary should be like. When shooting documentaries, many students fall into the style of conventional environmental protection films. This work makes me feel that the filmmaker genuinely cares about relevant issues, although the interview techniques, newspaper clippings and materials she drew are immature.

Lo: It shows the consciousness of the director, instead of showing her daily life. If the sea plays a big part in her life, the resulting work is a bit conventional. But I still feel her creative ideas and that the sea is very dear to her heart. Shooting a documentary at this age is also not an easy task. The work is quite decent.

Wong: I really enjoyed watching this work. Local youth documentaries are always homework about campus life or community-themed issues. Because the creator is quite unique, having been interested in diving from a very young age, she is at an advantage, and just examining the issue in a normal way is already very special. After watching it, I feel like I have gained a lot of knowledge about this subject. Even though the situation in Hong Kong has been disheartening in recent years, the film made me realize that there are still valuable things like corals in Hong Kong, and there is a group of young people, including a girl from Macedonia, doing conservation work. This perspective is pretty fresh.

- Lo: When I watched this film in the preliminary round, I had a strange feeling that I was not in Hong Kong. Over the past few years, many works all show Hong Kong in certain ways, but this film made me suddenly jump out of the usual convention and re-establish my understanding of Hong Kong.
- Sham: I like watching documentaries very much. As a documentary, I think this is a very conventional work, filled with hard facts, and it makes me feel like I'm reading a piece of homework. I appreciate the director's own precise and professional knowledge. As a viewer, I need further explanations. For example, when the interviewee mentions the problem of coral ossification, I was able to connect the sound with the picture and understand the reason why the coral turned white. The spirit of the work is commendable. I am very grateful to the director for using short films to promote the message that she wants to convey. However, she puts in too many hard facts into the documentary.
- Fan: Now we have come to the second part, which is the nomination of awards.
- Wong: I choose *Disregulation* for the Gold Award, *Relinquished* for Silver Award.
- Lui: Those are my choices too.
- Wong: For Special Mention, I nominate *The Endless Fate*, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* and *The Living Sea*.
- Leung: I choose *Disregulation* for the Gold Award. I am not sure about the Silver Award. For Special Mention, I choose *Relinquished*, *Hide and Seek*, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* and *The Endless Fate*.
- Lui: My Special Mentions are *The Endless Fate*, *Hide and Seek* and *The Living Sea*.
- Sham: I choose *Disregulation* for the Gold Award, the Silver Award can be either *Relinquished* or *Hide and Seek*, but I give *Relinquished* a higher score overall. Then Special Mention should be *Hide and Seek*, *In Pursuit of Friendship*, and I need time to come up with one more.
- Lo: Before coming to this meeting, I felt that there should be two Silver awards. I choose *Disregulation* and *Relinquished*, but I have no objection to giving the Gold Award to *Disregulation*. For Special Mention, I chose *In Pursuit of Friendship*, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*, and I haven't decided on the third.
- Fan: Why can't you choose the Gold Award?
- Lo: I think *Disregulation* starts out well, but the middle and the ending are a little weak. Of course, this is also related to the length of the film. I feel that the work gets weaker as it develops, which is a pity. I understand that the beginning is very strong, so it is difficult to sustain it. Compare that with *Bully's Wording*, which I saw the first time I served as a jury member, it was very innovative, no matter in terms of its form or the tension it brought out. It made me think it was the Gold Award right away. When

watching *Disregulation*, I feel like it is having some distance from the former. Among the finalists, *Disregulation* is still the best, but there is a slight gap with the Gold Award works I reviewed in the past, so I wish to state this on record.

Fan: Do you all agree that the Gold Award goes to *Disregulation*?

(Everyone nods)

Fan: Then *Disregulation* gets the Gold Award in this year's Youth category. For the Silver award, *Relinquished* currently has the most votes. I would like to ask Kenny (Leung) what he thinks, and does Yoyo (Sham) think *Hide and Seek* is also a Silver award choice?

Sham: I am okay with *Relinquished* or *Hide and Seek* getting Silver.

Leung: I am okay with *Relinquished* getting the Silver award too.

Fan: If everyone agrees, *Relinquished* will be the Silver award winner this year. Next, we have to select three Special Mention works. There are currently more than three nominations by jury members, but the distribution of votes is similar.

Sham: Siuyea (Lo) and I haven't chosen the third Special Mention. Do we have to cast our votes before discussing this?

Fan: Not necessarily, voting is just a sign to let everyone know what you selected. There are two guidelines here, one is that Special Mention can be a bronze award as Sau Ping (Wong) said, and the other is that these works may not be outstanding in all areas, but some aspects are worth emphasizing or encouraging.

Wong: I personally want *The Living Sea* to get Special Mention because it is very special. Special Mention is supposed to encourage, rather than an objective assessment of the work. As a documentary, although the filming is middling, it explores a professional and lesser-known subject matter, which is worthy of encouragement.

Sham: If I had to choose the third Special Mention from the current five choices, I would choose *The Living Sea* rather than *The Endless Fate*, but it's really hard to decide.

Lo: I really want *In Pursuit of Friendship* to get Special Mention. It has a lot of technical shortcomings, but the way it deals with emotions is rare in the youth category. This is a very subjective view, and some people may also think that the work is empty, but I think that it contains rich emotions, and flaws in the film makes it more distinguished. In addition, the subject of homosexuality is relatively rare compared to lesbians, because stories between men are more difficult to write. At the same time, both male protagonists look straight, which gives it an unconventional effect. The way the director shapes the material makes this work important and worthy of note.

- Sham: I totally agree. In fact, I have been worrying about my third vote, please remove my previous vote for *The Living Sea*.
- Lo: Although I like *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* very much, I would prefer *In Pursuit of Friendship* gets Special Mention. *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* is handled better, but *In Pursuit of Friendship* fits the criteria of Special Mention better.
- Leung: For the definition of Special Mention, one idea is that it is “a bronze award” second only to the Gold and Silver Awards, and the other one is an encouragement. I feel that everyone is leaning towards the latter. I have chosen all the three films with higher votes for Special Mention, but their themes are all political and social, the homogeneity of the combination is rather high and seems to be too monotonous. If *In Pursuit of Friendship* and *The Living Sea* are included, this problem can be reduced.
- Sham: That's a good idea. Although the three works are all about important personal experiences, awarding them Special Mention feels like not encouraging diversity.
- Wong: I propose to put these works into different combinations and then vote.
- Fan: Maybe you can share your views on the works?
- Leung: I choose *The Endless Fate* because it reflects some of the situations faced by people of this age, and even the state of the entire city. The story is complete, the acting is above average, and the message accords with the feelings of people in the current situation.
- Lui: I have something to add. While the Gold and Silver award winning works are outstanding and filled with personal style, *The Endless Fate* is a complete work, and such a work made by a director of this age can set a standard for the competition. Many student films aim high but may not be technically competent. I think there needs to be an indicator to let everyone know that Youth category works should at least reach this level.
- Wong: I also support *The Endless Fate*. It was the first work I saw. Compared with the previous two years, its quality surprised me, and I even thought there was a chance it could get the Gold award. The work uses a more conventional film language, which is easy to make mistakes, requires more resources and skills to execute. Even so, the director's handling is meticulous and his motivation is good, such as with the taxi scene I mentioned. The radio program mentions that it is the 34th Victoria Park gathering, which shows that the scene is futuristic.

The motivation and point of view on the film touched me, and if there was a bronze medal in the competition, I would like to give this work, it is more outstanding than other Special Mention works.

Sham: It seems that the three Special Mentions selected by Sau-ping (Wong) have an order, so my order will be *Hide and Seek*, followed by *In Pursuit of Friendship*. *Hide and Seek* touched me, it is playful sometimes, but it is very moving. Even though the point about generation gap is not obvious, the arrangement of putting the janitor, also a mother, who faces many students every day, meanwhile misses her son so much, gives lots of room for imagination. I sympathize with this character, so I think the premise of the story is valid. I also appreciate that it's only eight minutes long and it's not too lengthy. I agree with Kenny (Leung) that if there is more detail or if the film was 10 minutes long, the story will be more complete.

As for *In Pursuit of Friendship*, I think the acting is very convincing. I really identify with the awkward and low-key emotion in the film, and even felt that the narrative could be reduced a bit more.

Lo: The spark between the actors in *In Pursuit of Friendship* is part of the plot, and the development of the story is smooth and natural. The most unfortunate part is that the craftsmanship of the work does not support the narrative and properly portray the raw and touching interactions of the actors. Generally, the works in the Youth category have a kind of deliberateness, such as being obvious and preachy. As a narrative film, *In Pursuit of Friendship* is handled properly and portrays the emotional interactions between the characters well. If it was developed a little more, it may destroy the emotional touch of the film.

In addition, I think *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* adopts the visual diary method, which is worthy of encouragement in the Youth category. It's handled well, the scene under the column is probably the worst scene in the whole film, both in terms of duration and actors' placement, but I really liked the two pan shots and other shots, and the use of sound is appropriate.

*Hide and Seek* is the one work that doesn't touch me. It has a lot of conventional drama handling techniques, and it is very conservative in arranging changes in rhythm and atmosphere. In contrast with other works, I watched *Hide and Seek* many times, but every time I watched it, I felt a sense of loss, and I can't feel the impact of the work.

Many of the arrangements of *The Endless Fate* are meticulous, but the mention of the old Hong Kong is something that I can't understand. Some young people like and yearn for the old era. For example, I read a report saying that young people in Hong Kong and Japan would dress in the style of the 1980s. For me, this is reasonable. Rationally, I understand that the protagonists of *The Endless Fate* still listen to CDs, but the character design fails to convince me. I feel that it is just something written by the screenwriter. If the Danny Chan elements are removed, the work may be much more complete.

The author of *The Living Sea* is a relatively minority group in Hong Kong, and she focuses on a subject that mainstream Hong Kong people do not pay attention to. Therefore, it is reasonable for this work to get Special Mention. It's just that compared with other works, I'm still not sure who my last vote should go to.

- Sham: I also appreciate the teenage director of *The Endless Fate* shooting a 20-minute work, but I enjoyed *In Pursuit of Friendship* more and found it more convincing. I also thought that the director of *The Endless Fate* created characters whose emotions are at odds with people his age. Even after hearing what the other jury members said, I still didn't feel comfortable with the work and was not moved. Its average score is high, however I wouldn't pick it as a Special Mention. If I had to choose the third work, between *The Endless Fate*, *The Living Sea and Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*, I would choose *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*. As an audience member, I feel *The Living Sea* is too factual, maybe I prefer to see works rely more on cinematic language.
- Lo: If I had to choose from *The Endless Fate*, *The Living Sea* and *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*, I would give my third Special Mention vote to *The Endless Fate*.
- Wong: For me, I'd also choose *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*, but in my mind, its ranking among the three Special Mentions is relatively low, so I propose a fairer approach and ask everyone's opinion about it. I want to put different slates of Special Mention works and ask you to vote on them rather than count the votes of each work.
- Sham: I wonder if I should give points to the works in the three Special Mentions. In addition, whether we consider if the Special Mention works should convey different themes, or if it's okay for them to have the same theme. We need to set a direction, I don't know what is the criteria for judging.
- Fan: Regarding the spirit and criteria of judging the works, it is slightly different every year, and we do it by consensus among the five jury members. Sometimes we feel that because of the times, the importance of certain works may increase their worth being awarded in this era; there are also jury members who place the most importance on narrative content regardless of the times, so the jury members need to reach a consensus. The organizer is flexible and we respect the opinions of the jury members while providing guidance at the same time. Just now Yoyo (Sham) proposed that we rank the works. Why don't we assign points to your three Special Mention choices, with 3 points for the best one, 2 points for the second and 1 point for the third.
- Lo: I give *In Pursuit of Friendship* 3 points, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* 2 points, *The Endless Fate* 1 point.
- Lui: *The Endless Fate* 2 points, *Hide and Seek* 3 points, *The Living Sea* 1 point.
- Wong: *The Endless Fate* 3 points, *The Living Sea* 2 points, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* 1 point.
- Leung: *The Endless Fate* 3 points, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* 2 points, *Hide and Seek* 1 point.

- Sham: *Hide and Seek* 3 points, *In Pursuit of Friendship* 2 points, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* 1 point.
- Wong: With this scoring method, it is possible that we end up with three works with similar themes. I want to vote on different slates of works. The reason behind my proposal is to see if different combinations of works can have more encouraging results.
- Fan: *The Endless Fate* has four nominations for Special Mention, and now it has the highest score with 9 points. Do you agree that it deserves Special Mention?
- Lui: Yes.
- Leung: I agree with Sau-ping (Wong), and see if everyone thinks the combination of works is important, and want to include the visions beyond the three highest score works. But because of the high score of *The Endless Fate*, I think it should win Special Mention.
- Lo: I think at this stage, *The Endless Fate* should be confirmed as Special Mention. I think we need to think about whether all three Special Mention works should have similar themes, or whether a diverse combination is more representative of everyone's choice. I myself prefer diversity, otherwise we would exclude many other possibilities.
- Lui: I also hope there are other possibilities.
- Fan: I want to confirm whether *The Endless Fate* is confirmed as one of the Special Mention awards?
- Wong: Will Yoyo (Sham) object? She is the only one who didn't choose *The Endless Fate*.
- Sham: I don't object. I vote for my favorite works, but I will not oppose the works with high scores.
- Leung: If we choose according to slates of works, there should be six slates at present.
- Wong: Then let's cast one vote from each of the six options and see if any slate has more votes.
- Fan: Then, everyone can choose two works from the remaining four: *Hide and Seek*, *The Living Sea*, *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* and *In Pursuit of Friendship*, and you can vote on different slates.
- Fan: In the end, Lo chose *In Pursuit of Friendship* and *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*; Wong chose *The Living Sea* and *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*; Sham chose *Hide and Seek* and *In Pursuit of Friendship*; Lui chose *Hide and Seek* and *The Living Sea*; Leung chose *In Pursuit of Friendship* and *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*;

Therefore, the combination of *In Pursuit of Friendship* and *Goodbye In A Time Of Despair* got the highest number of votes.

Leung: Let me explain my reason for switching from *Hide and Seek* to *In Pursuit of Friendship*. As I mentioned earlier, I hope that the results of the competition will reflect diversity, so I had to choose between *In Pursuit of Friendship* and *The Living Sea*. *In Pursuit of Friendship* is relatively unrefined and awkward in some respects, but for its subject matter, this style is worthy of encouragement. As for *The Living Sea*, I have higher expectations for documentaries.

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**27th ifva Youth Category Award Winners**

**Gold Award**

*Disregulation*

Yuen Wai-ho

**Silver Award**

*Relinquished*

Li Hei-lam, Chan Yik-tung

**Special Mention**

*The Endless Fate*

Wong Wai-wa

*In Pursuit of Friendship*

Sky San

*Goodbye In A Time Of Despair*

Chan Po-yan