

The 13th ifva Asian New Force Category Jury Meeting Transcript

Jurors in Attendance: Yau Ching (YAU), Hung Hung (HUNG), Yano Kazuyuki (KAZUYUKI)

Organizer Representatives: Edith Chiu (CHIU), Mickey Choi (CHOI)

Japanese Translator: Maggie Lee

Carrier

YAU: I'm pretty surprised halfway in the film **Carrier**, because we've seen a lot of films about China with around the same subject matter, about childhood and poverty, a very popular combination. But the way this [director] does it is pretty surprising in a way that the emotion is pretty reserved and suppressed, it is not too sentimental, it could have been much worse. I think the cinematographer is pretty good, there are a lot of location shooting, and the actors I think are excellent, the kid was very natural, and the script itself is pretty well-rounded, I mean the story-telling technique. For me it is a well-rounded production, from script to acting, to lighting, to cinematography. It is not that it is particularly strong in any area, but is all-rounded. In that way it is stronger than most other works. **JAI** for example I like very much, but it has some major problems in the storytelling. It could be very confusing sometimes, although the thought behind it is pretty original.

Personally I like **Carrier** in that way, because every one of those characters are pretty rounded. It actually has development, which is rare for short films. You actually see a character develop, and I want to see more and more about this character. While **Half Teaspoon** talks about ..., maybe two thirds of it, the story basically stopped without going anywhere.

YAU: Hung Hung, I want to hear your thoughts about **Carrier**, why don't you like **Carrier**?

HUNG: I think for me it's [of] too conventional storytelling. I think many previous films are doing better than it, so I think it is a little cliché for me.

KAZUYUKI: ... I think the storytelling is good, but ... conventional. A well-made film, so emotional... I like, but not so experimental, not so creative.

YAU: When I watched it I thought it was so realistic, I felt like I was there. There are

so much real life details, you can go into the film. Unlike some other films which were just made out of somebody's living room.

BARE

KAZUYUKI: Very good combination of old footage and sounds. Combination is very nice.

YAU: I actually like **BARE** too, right after the first screening I think I liked **BARE** most. I picked all three from the second screening. I really like the sound recording, because it is a very intense subject, it was very hard for a first time filmmaker to do such a topic. What I don't like about **BARE** is, I think the relationship between image and sound is a bit too arbitrary. She has the footage, she has the sound, the sound was done very well, the structure and the editing, the image was also edited well, but the relationship between the two could have become more complicated, I think.

HUNG: I think there are some points she pointed out or focused on at some part of the film is quite successful, especially the ending.

YAU: I think **BARE** has a lot of credits.

Ru Lin Alley

HUNG: I like **Ru Lin Alley** pretty much, but I think the last act is a disaster, the red balloon, the feathers... And the old guy, I don't know who he is. I think it is a failure, but the first three parts are quite moving and very well directed and shot. Many details are very touching. I'm hesitating between **Ru Lin Alley** and **Half Teaspoon** in my list. They are both well accomplished, but there are bad things with **Ru Lin Alley**, but the touching part is also... for me is better than "Half Teaspoon".

KAZUYUKI: tructure, um... that ... focus on the grandmother, and inside the room, especially I'm impressed by the sound from the outdoors, very well-edited sound and image.

YAU: problem with **Ru Lin Alley** is that it was too much [like] Jia Zhang Ke, to the extent that I actually sat there and thought it was so pretentious. But there are a lot of emotional details that I think he did it.... Like the guy ... some empty shot that are not directly narrative oriented, like the guy in the balcony looking

at everybody, all those ... there are some very nice emotional details, but I think the storytelling is really a disaster.

Half Teaspoon

YAU: he problems with **Half Teaspoon** is that, in terms of techniques, it was pretty accomplished, the cinematography and lighting were excellent. But it looks so much like Wong Kar-wai added with Tsai Ming-liang, for me that is my major problem. It wasn't very original in that way, but technically very accomplished. I think the script is pretty interesting in a way that it really gives a completely ironic twist to the representation of marriage and love. Because for the representation of marriage we have seen a lot of short films, but for this one it is pretty reserved and the irony works well with the cinematography and the art design. But again the characterization and relationship between the characters could be developed better.

KAZUYUKI: ... very strange. It is quite different from the other films. I like it.

YAU: I like it too.

HUNG: Only problem for me is there is too much of Tsai Ming-liang [in it]. Including the editing style, the camera framing, and the emotion is too much [similar to] Tsai's, but I like it as well, it is very well made.

JAI

HUNG: Actually **JAI** is my number one. I like its simplicity in form, but with complex thoughts behind, between life and filmmaking. It looks very simple, but it makes me think a lot after it finished.

YAU: I totally agree, I think among all the works I have seen today, I think **JAI** is the most experimental and is really difficult to make. For me it is like class analysis of society, which most short filmmakers would never want to do. And it looks very simple, and I think it has a lot of technical problems as well, but because it is a very thoughtful piece, that it could have been much longer and more in-depth, so now it may be a little too simple and too much on the surface. But still, given a very short time that he or she has used, just the contrast between real life and filmmaking using one character, and also the ending is I think

extraordinary, the ending with factory worker walking out I think is very nicely done. It is like somebody who really knows where to end, which is also hard for short film making. And I have to say that I love the description, it is from somebody who really knows how to write film description. It's not about telling the story.

[Ranking in order from the highest mark...

JIA

Half Teaspoon

BARE

Ru Lin Alley

Carrier]

YAU: Let's decide on the Special Mention, whether there will be one or two?
From this list, ***Half Teaspoon*** would get a special mention. Would we have a problem with that?

KAZUYUKI: Special Mention? Not the Grand Prize?

HUNG: So you suggest we have two Grand Prize?

YAU: Hung Hung, ***Half Teaspoon*** is not on your list, do you have a problem if it is awarded the Grand Prize?

HUNG: I have no problem. I would agree to award him a grand prize.

YAU: it would be fine.

HUNG: Two Grand Prizes. So all our number ones can get Grand Prize.

[Mickey asked them to comment of the rest of the finalists]

I Need Some Sleep

YAU: Speaking of clichés, that's why personally I don't think ***Carrier*** is that much cliché, because of the films we have seen before, in comparison. I think there seems to be a major problem in Korean short films these days, in general, a lot of Korean films from certain art schools have very similar styles, and they

all pretend to be comedies, pretend to be from a woman's point of view. Almost all of them, these days.

KAZUYUKI: well-made,but nothing more to comment!

HUNG: I put it into more details, I think the male character could be more convincing in acting, and for a comedy like this I think it is a little too long. It could be shorter.

Nine Stories

YAU: Had same problems actually, to a large extent, the acting is overacting, almost all of them. It's a nice idea to divide it into nine episodes, but each episode is so underdeveloped that it is really hard to tell why it has to be structured like that, half way through. Because the structure seems to be just imposed upon a very clichéd story, it doesn't help the story.

HUNG: I think it's between realistic and stylish film, but I think the form could be more pure, every story could be more powerful. But now the tempo of every story is almost the same, so it becomes boring very soon.

KAZUYUKI: [It is] Interesting to make ***Nine Stories***. But the relationships in it is ... I can't understand it well, the relationship.

Metamorphosis

HUNG: I think the dialogue is pretty bad, it prevents actors to do convincing acting. I like its symbol, it maybe is a film about SARS or some human disease, but... ok, the cinematography and the scenography is pretty good.

YAU: ... looks like a Wim Wenders film. The prison, I know where. The road leading from Banciao to Ximen Ting.. The location selection is really good. ... I am impressed by his choice of location, and I think some of those locations were quite spectacular and gave us a new light on how we see Taipei. It actually really shows a desolate kind of feeling, using urban Taipei which is really hard. I agree with most of what Hung Hung said, and I think also for a young director, I think he is way too ambitious in tackling such a complicated topic like incest and ***Metamorphosis*** which are also an extremely complicated issues which

have been tackled in art history for a long time.

The Drunken Concubine

HUNG: I think the dialogue and the acting is too artificial, too dramatic. I think the dramatic part of this film is good sometimes, when they are singing Peking opera.... And the actress is there... they are good. But I feel that some dialogue is explaining too much for the audience. It is not real, not convincing in that situation for the characters. They explain too much for the audience. It makes the film not so realistic.

KAZUYUKI: Un... It's... nothing new .

YAU: I actually think that the director wants to do a lot, too many things. Again it is too ambitious for the director. In terms of form for example, trying to use one shot for a thirteen-minute film, you are asking a lot from your actors and actresses and your script. You are asking a lot. And because of that, the actresses really couldn't deliver, and it put so much pressure on a script which wasn't developed enough because of that form. So the form created a lot of problems that the director couldn't solve. If not it could have been a much better film. In terms of content, it was trying also to do way too much, from abuse of domestic helper, which is a very complicated, popular and common issue in Taiwan and Hong Kong as well, which rarely exists in movies, and rarely addressed. So it is a very complicated topic, but it doesn't really deliver. And then the generation gap as well. The death of the son, the prejudice towards the son instead of the daughter... All of these are very common and real problems in Chinese society, are just not addressed, just skimmed over, and it is very unfair to the issues.

HUNG: So it became a melodrama. So sorry.

YAU: It's quite pitiful.

Old Times

HUNG: Quite cute comedy, but I think it repeats too much the memories.

YAU: I like the art direction, quite very much. I think the director probably has a lot of

talent in developing better stories. But the story is a little too thin, just cutting back between the present and the past, which becomes very formulaic after a while. Very predictable.

KAZUYUKI: Very funny, and but the story is so typical and popular... but is a funny film.

HUNG: I cannot find any reason why the husband starts to remember all the memories. Why at this point? It could happen every day, but why now?

YAU: And if this husband does that regularly, he can't live a life!

Puppets

YAU: Only this one was shot in film.

KAZUYUKI: Typical youth drama. I think ... nothing experimental.

HUNG: I just couldn't figure out one thing. Why the seashore and sunrise could rescue their youth? Or could be their so happy memory.

Carrier

YAU: It was shot in Guizhou, and Guizhou is one of the poorest area in China. And tackling the two issues of children and poverty wasn't easy, and for this particular film it wasn't too sentimental.

HUNG: Well-made and well storytelling.

KAZUYUKI: Not too emotional, excellent actors. The storytelling is powerful, a very nice film.

Ru Lin Alley

HUNG: It's very concentrated and well directed except the last part. I feel sorry for the last part because it is too artificial, showing those symbols.

YAU: I actually think it is a very nice idea, the ending, But because it wasn't executed well enough that it became a disaster. The fact that the old woman,

the grandmother, remains the same, but then the son grows old, that is a really nice idea, initially. If the director could think a little harder how this particular ending relates to the entire film, e.g. cutting of the hair, his going back, and all the medicine he brings, and his singing with the radio—all these elements could go together a little bit more organically, it would have been a much stronger ending. But now the ending is just a shock, and that's it. It is not even successful because it is very confusing. We are not even sure if it is the same character.

KAZUYUKI: very unique and Grandmother was excellent, the sound from the outside ... is very nice. And I really agree with your [Hung Hung's] comment.

CHOI: So it remains unchanged, **JAI** and **Half Teaspoon** goes to the Grand Prize, and then **BARE** for the Special Mention. Which one gets the Canon HD Camera...

YAU: If we really have to choose, it is a very difficult choice. For countries like Thailand and Indonesia, I would suggest to give the camera to the woman. Because we don't have many women filmmakers in these two countries. Taiwan is different. So, it goes to JIA's Director.

HUNG & KAZUYUKI: Yes. Agree.

Asian New Force Category

Grand Prize

Half Teaspoon

Ifa ISFANSYAH

Grand Prize

SUWICHAKORNPONG

Anocha

Special Mention

Bare

Santana ISSAR