

## The 13<sup>th</sup> ifva Youth Category Jury Meeting Transcript

Jurors in Attendance: Poon Tat-pui (POON), Chat Lam (LAM), Patrick Kong(KONG), Chan Pikyu (CHAN)

Absent Juror: Karena Lam (LAM)

Organizer Representatives: Connie Lam (CONNIE), Mickey Choi (CHOI)

CONNIE: We'd like to encourage more people to develop [on making film and video], and hope that the ifva will become a platform for encouraging cross-fertilization of creativity, knowledge and experience on media creation among different regions in Asia. Hope we all consider the following aspects in your judgments: content, creativity, form, structure, techniques, and whether it has made good use of the medium of video, and the overall completeness of the work... Please elaborate about your selections.

POON: My choice is **Family**, I think it is simple and clear, it has got the mood, and can express the kind of emptiness in the father-and-son relationship.

LAM: I have chosen **Voice in the Darkness**, based on its plot, and the overall feeling it gave me, because I'm not a technical person. It is very real, the filmmakers used what they know instead of trying to create some void, emptiness or love stories that they have never experienced before. The genuineness is touching, the way they bring out the world of the blind in different angles and situations, such as Christmas. How do you let a blind man feels the atmosphere of Christmas? And they have used various documentary methods such as street interview, it makes the film rich in perspective. The final scene of the road sign is like Mida's touch, I am touched and I think it is successful.

KONG: Actually I like this one too, because it is the most down-to-earth and authentic. Eight out of ten of the films attained high technical level, but for Youth Category, shouldn't we hear the voice and see from the perspective of young people instead? This is the most important, I think the works should be young, should show how young people see the world and things around them, but most of the works lack this. Too much somniloquy too self-obsessed. If the filmmakers are here I'd like to ask them why they made the films like this. Such as **Deliverance**, why are the dialogues in English? Cinematography, editing and composition are very good, but I have doubts about their creative style and I don't know what they are talking about. And I don't know if it is because today's young people are very anxious, many films also

show sadness and doubts about life. Such as “Dreams”, why it has to be so sick? Is it what they are looking for, or are they actually like this? Isn't it too pretentious? So ***Voice in the Darkness*** is the most down-to-earth. Actually art doesn't always mean you have to do the most challenging things, even in a competition we are not looking for the one which is the most difficult to make, rather we want the one which can express the most in a given format. ***Voice in the Darkness*** is very clear, as Yat Fung has said, the road sign at the end, and the numbers at the beginning are well designed, simple and effective, and then the fake interviews follows.

My comment as written earlier is: The subject matter comes from everyday life. It can bring forth discussion, though is too close to news documentary, it is the most realistic work among all.

This work impresses me most among the ten finalists.

CHAN: ***Family*** moved me as I watched. I think this student is very wonderful. He doesn't overact, but is so immersed in his role, maybe that is himself in real life. The whole work is concise and direct, no need to ponder about it for long, it sounds very real to me. This teenager used a variety of ways to express his emotion. This one and ***Voice in the Darkness*** impress me most. And ***Lost View*** too, it is very special in terms of creative methods, though it misses the point in a number of places.

POON: There's one point I want to add about ***Voice in the Darkness***. Since I'm a documentary filmmaker, its only failure is, they should have found a real blind person instead of faking it, which makes it look like they are playing a trick, although I know this is not what they intended to do. They are actually trying to show us what a blind man's world is like, what kind of things he will encounter. Then the conflict appears, and this conflict will destroy the whole thing. This is a pity, if the blind man is real, I'd have given them much higher marks. I agree that this is a very thoughtful piece, but it is a pity that the core element is faked, maybe the [fake blind man] is the director himself? If they could find a real blind person – I believe it is possible—then the whole thing would be very complete, and will arouse people's compassion, to really think about how the blind man faces reality.

KONG: The other work I like is ***Lost View*** because the artist has a deeply felt awareness of the environment around him. The other theme is the concern about society and life, not just confined to the personal. Other works mostly focus on the self, like about their own future, or just about their own happiness or sadness. It is not the most

technically accomplished work, but it feels good after seeing it. For example the dream about running up the hill, he ***Dream*** that this place becomes a metropolis, then when he wakes up he sees construction work has already begun near the village. It is the common scenery of our rural land being turned into container dumps. It is very real and he creates the dreamy scene in a realistic background. The imageries are touching and observations about the transformation of the community and the environment are made with sensitivity and are tinted with subtle sadness. I like the understated ending, it's not making a definite statement, but is rather melancholy. I like this way better.

Connie : Now three works stand out. Poon Tat-pui please make your selection before you go.

POON: ***Family*** comes first, second comes ***GameLive***. My view actually cannot escape the adult's perspective, but I can see this film carries the message about kids' love of the video games and we can see that the director loves to play too. On the whole it is good, but I don't know if it is required by the school or not, the ending had to make a critical statement about the games. While ***Family*** is very genuine, you can feel it. I don't have a third piece to recommend. Some pieces maybe worth mentioning, such as ***My Own World***, it is too self-obsessed, while ***Deliverance*** is too ambitious, its scale makes it look as if it is going to win, technically. But as it is too ambitious, the messages become too wild, though interesting, it loses focus. What he needs to learn is how to convey his many messages in a focused manner, so as to effectively deliver the themes. For me I recommend this, because he worked hard on it. Another recommendation is ***Lost View***, but unfortunately the picture quality is not good, as if shot on a cell phone, unless that is what is intended.

CHAN: I think so. Actually there are different picture qualities in the film. So I think it is more experimental in the way they try to speak to the audience by means of images.

KONG: ***Ko Chiu II*** is my biggest doubt. It is about the life of a teacher and is his memoirs, it tells how a kung-fu fighting kid becomes a teacher. This is a very strange film, kind of interesting, and is worth discussion.

POON: The filmmaking technique is OK.

KONG: I don't mind the technical side of ***Lost View***, as today's equipment is very developed, and the new generation is very precocious technically. If you ask me, I

still think that ***Voice in the Darkness*** is the best, as it is the only one which actually goes out to the streets to do a project. Even though they couldn't find a blind man, but it is willing to face people and to get in touch with society. Other films were just made in the school or at home, even the most ambitious work is not having any communication with the world outside. But what is challenging about making a film is whether you dare to go out in the street and face real challenges. You may be unable to finish the shooting, you maybe scolded or given a lot of pressure. I appreciate this work as a young people's project.

POON: I'm open about ***Lost View***. At last I want to mention ***Detective Clumsy – A Campus Homicide***. Making a film can be fun, and it's got it, and they have done a good job. A film with a message is good, but as kids, they want to enjoy themselves, and this one is fun. I think such freedom is necessary, and in comparison with ***My Own World***, you can see the sharp contrast. The latter is totally obsessed with whatever mood of adolescence.

CHAN: Actually I'm considering whether it should be ***Family*** or ***Voice in the Darkness***, but I agree with your point about communication, among all the films I appreciate that ... it is more outstanding, so I'll give it my vote for Gold Award. While ***Family*** I'd vote for it for the Silver. I'd choose ***Lost View*** and ***Deliverance*** as Special Mention. I don't like ***My Own World***.

KONG: I pick ***Voice in the Darkness*** for Gold Award. I can't comment on ***Family*** because my version of the DVD is faulty. The second film I like is ***Lost View***, because these two are closer to everyday life. I recommend ***Timeless*** for Special Mention, I am the only one who votes for it, but I like it. Though this one is also self-indulgent, but we have not yet considered acting. The girl gave a superb performance here. I am a film director so I am more sensitive about actors. The whole film only shows her talking to herself and to a doll, it is very natural, not pretentious. I don't know she is the director herself or she is acting under the director's orders, her solos... I like the story, it is about escaping from reality, in the end she knows she has to face it, and that the watch will tick again. The idea is not new, that time stops, then that you can think and do whatever you want during the void but then in the end the watch ticks again and you have to face reality. This story is told a million times, but in this framework, it is kind of positive, the protagonist won't sink further into indulgence. In the end it cited a quotation by Picasso, which means something like an old person with a young mind is like being imprisoned. It is pretty complete. And I recommend this actress. When young people make films, they only care about

fancy shots, editing, music, being stylish and trendy, on the other hand they don't care much about acting, content and whether that has already been done before. They reproduce without caring what the original is. I don't like **GameLive**, because such images we have seen many times already, though the theme about the bad influence of video games is controversial. But gun shooting scenes we have seen too many times already, there's no meaning for you to make what has been made before. What we expect of young folks are things fresh to our eyes, they have to be daring. They have to know that filmmaking is not just about shooting something, but actors are very important too. **Dreams** intended to be a drama film, but the actors just failed to deliver.

LAM: I would like to talk about **Deliverance**. The director has cited a quotation from Fight Club. It gives me the feeling that he just bases his work on something else, without his own creation, and then they start to masturbate. After watching ten films I think over half of them have the same problem, they are so self-obsessed, just like masturbating. If I continue on the metaphor of sex, love-making between two people will be much fulfilling than doing it yourself! So why does he have to film it and show us? What does he want to talk about? If you feel something about the quotation written by the author of **Fight Club**, why don't you develop something yourself? But here we can't see his own things. And his English is a very big problem. As a performance art, this is a good masturbation, it doesn't matter if nobody understands what he said, but in a short film I expect to get something. The most important thing about short filmmaking is to deliver your point within a very short period of time. Another is **My Own World**. She said "the feeling of reality torments them", but what exactly is tormenting them? Aren't you sentimentalizing over nothing? Why do these teenagers feel so much emptiness? Then comes **Timeless** and its quote from Picasso, about a young soul trapped in an old body, their message is so helpless and discontent, and then they put forward a question: how do you choose? But actually Picasso's question doesn't leave you with a choice at all, You can only die if you want to avoid it. Isn't it because they are guilty after masturbation so they need to make up some kind of message? But these just come out of nowhere and make people feel uncomfortable.

KONG: For example, these works quoted **Fight Club** and Picasso. The problem with today's young people is that they like to show off what they know. My doubt is whether they are influenced by those quotes to make the film, or because they feel that the films lack something, so they just add some quotes to play safe? If there's a quotation, it isn't totally original, it needs footnotes, but if the audience has to read

the footnotes before understanding your work, then there's a problem.

LAM: Whether they have thoroughly understood the message is a big problem. I like **Family**, it is simple and direct, the symbols are good. The only problem with **Lost View** is that it is too long, and they should not fail in basic technical thing, such as spitting into the microphone. I like **Voice in the Darkness** too, I'll vote it for Gold Award. I like **GameLive** too, I don't know whether the director has thought about it, today's images are product designed to stimulate our senses, such as very fast music, synchronizing frames, and high speed jumping frames, but there's nothing left afterwards. If the director could catch this point, this will be very successful. A lot of editing techniques are employed and messages are effectively conveyed. **Ko Chiu IIs** as Patrick has said, why do they have to choose Mr Ko?

KONG: And why is it called **Ko Chiu II**? Does it mean that they have made **Ko Chiu I** before ? Or they start directly with a sequel?

LAM: If we are making a portrait of a well-known political figure, you can film it like this, but as an audience we don't know who Mr. KO is. So the way it makes him look like a celebrity doesn't convince us. If it doesn't portray him as being so handsome, it will be more realistic.

KONG: But Mr. KO acted with style and confidence.

CHAN: But it's too much.

LAM: **Dreams** is a very beautiful film of 18 minutes, it is artistic and worth credit. But the final scene shows the girl squeezing tears from her eyes for a whole minute, then I start to withdraw and think, the film is masturbating again! I don't know how it could be better. It is about the vicious cycle of hurting and be hurt, the pace could be faster. "**Detective Clumsy – A Campus Homicide** as the last one in the screening serves as a delighting dessert. I like it, it's a happy film. As Poon Tat-pui said, you've got to enjoy yourself in filmmaking, and they've got it in this film.

KONG: I have to add that **Ko Chiu II** even includes NG footages, it's interesting why they have to show us. This is a really strange film.

LAM: My second choice is **Family**, it's clear and concise. I recommend **GameLive** and "**Detective Clumsy – A Campus Homicide** for Special Mention.

CONNIE: According to our votes and discussion, ***Voice in the Darkness*** will get the Gold while ***Family*** gets the Silver coz it has 2 votes. Now we need to see whether Patrick will disagree.

KONG: I need to see ***Family*** again.

[Watching ***Family***]

LAM: The lyrics of Coldplay have something to do with it.

CHAN: I don't feel good about the use of songs, actually it's not necessary, just ends like this is OK.

KONG: They lack confidence, thinking that more is better.

CHAN: Isn't it boring?

KONG: If the youngsters could make their own songs it will be much more creative and I would appreciate that.

CHAN: But they didn't give credit to the songs at all, they should have listed that in the rollers.

CONNIE: We have instructed them about this.

KONG: I have no objection against ***Family*** getting an award.

CONNIE: There are several nominations for Special Mention, they are ***Deliverance*** 2 votes; ***Timeless*** 1 vote; ***Lost View*** 2 votes; ***GameLive*** 2 votes, and ***Detective Clumsy—A Campus Homicide*** 1 vote. Based on the number of votes, the awardees should be ***Deliverance***, ***Lost View*** and ***GameLive***. Does anybody have any objection?

CHAN: No, in general.

KONG: As it is called Special Mention, there should be something we can mention about the works? Can we ask the filmmakers to explain why their English is like that [at the award ceremony]? We can Special Mention your technical achievement, but

isn't there something we need to bring out, to ask them why they choose to use English, and tell them their grammar is problematic? I'd agree if we can ask.

CHAN: This is good, because this can help them.

CONNIE: Do you think that even though **Detective Clumsy** doesn't get the Special Mention, from our discussion, probably we can mention the point about the joy of movie making? You can think about it.

CHAN: I think each of the works can be mentioned.

KONG: Yes, each can be discussed. **Detective Clumsy** is representative too, fun is the most important thing.

CHAN: And they need to know why they are given or not given an award.

CHOI: So **Voice in the Darkness** is the winner of Gold Award, while **Family** gets the Silver. Special Mention goes to **Deliverance**, **Lost View** and **GameLive**.

[ifva: Karena Lam's comments are as follows:]

First Choice: **Lost View**

The P.O.V's of the directors were nicely done. Presented a kind of helplessness between people, city, & inevitable changes in our modern society.

Second Choice: **My Own World**

The humming of the O.S was nice. The storyline is simple and simply shot.

Third Choice: **GameLive**

Liked the imagination of the boy & his 'game' world. Short created suspense and humor relief in the end.

Comment to other works: **Deliverance**

The content of this short was not delivered clearly.

## Youth Category

### Gold Award

*Voice in the Darkness*

Ka-wai LEE, Chiu-ting LAI

**Silver Award**

*Family*

Chun-wai HONG, Chi-Kin LAM, Fu-lim CHAN, Ho-man TANG

**Special Mention**

*Deliverance*

Alan Tsz-wai KWAN

**Special Mention**

*GameLive*

Ching-kui FONG

**Special Mention**

*Lost View*

Kai-lun CHAN, Shun-wa CHAN