

**The 26th ifva Awards
Animation Category Jury Meeting Transcript**

Jury Members: Lo Che-ying (Lo), Ho Ka-ho (Ho), Kong Kee (Kong), Mak Shing-fung (Mak),
Hsieh Wen-ming (Hsieh)

Organizer representative: Kattie Fan (Fan), Sammy Wong (Wong)

- Fan: Thanks everyone for acting as our jury members and watching the 10 finalist works. Today, our mission is to select the awards for the Animation Category from these 10 works. Let's discuss these works first and select one Gold, one Silver and one Special Mention Award. If you don't have any further questions, we will discuss the works one by one. The first one is *Mountains and Seas - Village of Muds*.
- Mak: The story is very good; it is taken from *Classic of Mountains and Sea*, but with some variations. I feel the work strikes a good balance between the story and the distinctiveness of the content. It is relatively calculated and is the first in a series. In terms of uniqueness, it does not contain a lot of unexpected things. This is what I felt after seeing this film.
- Lo: This animation is done very well and professionally in all aspects. He includes every animation technique he can muster. The story is well-told, and is like a TV drama, which does not feel very fresh to me. I like its theme, which is touching to me. In addition to being very entertaining, the work also carries a moving message. It is a very beautiful work. Generally speaking, this work is very similar to a commercial film, and is handled professionally and well, and commercial works that are handled well are rare.
- Ho: Let me also chime in. I think this work is very professional, but does not seem to be independent enough. This may be a problem. Every aspect is done very well and precisely. Hong Kong people will have a lot of feelings when watching this film, and will make them laugh in parts. I think it's difficult to make a humorous film, and this work does a good job in this respect. I actually laughed out loud. The expressions and movements of the character are well done and the rhythm is good.
- Lo: It is calculated, but being calculated is not easy. Telling a story well is no easy task, and it is hard to have good dubbing and music.
- Kong: I want to see if the work expresses something that this competition wants to encourage. I think every aspect of this work is well executed.
- Hsieh: I am very touched by this film. This funny and humorous work is very good, and the theme really touches me. Although I am a Taiwanese, I can really understand what it is about.
- Fan: If you don't have anything more to add, let's move on to the next work, *BLANKET TALK*.
- Lo: I like this very much.
- Mak: It works on two levels. The first one is two children playing and chatting under the sheets, and the second one is probably the earthquake in Taiwan. There are several points that make the audience wonder whether the children are dead. Through dialogue and animation, the creator takes the audience into the story, and the layout is quite intricate and unique.

- Lo: I like the art direction of the work. The whole arrangement is very good. At first, I thought it is just about two young brothers and sisters who are playing and laughing, but it turns out to be about the environment after an earthquake. They are in a very special situation. The content of what they say can be bigger. They talk about the world after death and their parents, but I feel that is not enough. If they can go deeper and talk more, the final reveal about the environment after the earthquake will be more powerful and moving. On the whole, it is still a very good work.
- Ho: I very much agree with Lo Sir (Lo Che-ying). The first part relies on dialogue, and the animation is not done well enough. Compared with the dialogue, the visuals are inferior. The children's dialogue is very naive and cute, but the contrast between their dialogue and the meaning behind it is not apparent, even though I was still able to catch the feeling behind it, and felt many different emotions. The first time I watched it, I thought it was just about two children chatting. At the end, when I realized it was about an earthquake, I thought the story was very interesting. I think it's a pity that the story is not well paced, and the animation is not very good-looking. These are the shortcomings.
- Kong: My thoughts are similar. The first time I saw the twist, I was pleasantly surprised. The children are likable, but there were not many things I could savor when I watched it again.
- Hsieh: This work is done by a student in our school. She is good at writing scripts, and very good at writing about daily life. These two children are very cute, and the animation can be a bit richer, but overall, it is quite complete.
- Fan: If there are no other opinions, let's go to the next work, *Be With Me*.
- Mak: The creator is a very mature illustrator from Hong Kong, who is responsible for the visuals, character design and story. The various aspects are well coordinated and the whole work is smooth. By comparison, *Mountains and Seas - Village of Muds*. is more varied. The target audience for this work may be people familiar with his illustrations, and are probably quite young. There are not too many variations within the work and the sound is relatively monotonous. The whole work just uses music to create emotions, with few variations.
- Lo: The visuals look like a picture book, like a moving picture book, and the length is very long at more than ten minutes long, with music throughout. The animation is not very rich, it relies mainly on beautiful pictures but there are no special camera movements, etc. The overall feeling is relatively flat. Although there is a climax, the overall feeling is a little flat. You have to be careful when watching it, otherwise your attention may drift. The work is more like a sketch.
- Ho: The work is too direct. As Lo Sir said, it is straightforward. In the last meeting, Kong Kee mentioned the music, so I paid special attention to it this time. It may be different if shown in a cinema, but I felt the story lacked impact and the story is not conveyed very well by the music. I think it would be better for him to add some sound effects. It is basically a very complete work, but there are no surprises.
- Kong: My feelings are also similar. In fact, all the works are perfect when viewed independently, but when you look at them together, there are bound to be comparisons. This work is relatively dull, with few surprises. It is a pretty and decent work, but does not leave any lasting impressions in my mind.
- Hsieh: Generally speaking, it's a little flat.
- Fan: The next work is *Buoy*.

- Mak: I like this work very much, especially the art direction and visual treatment. I don't know if this is a feature of works from Taiwan Arts University. I can already guess that many works come from this university, like *Neon* from a few years ago. Perhaps it is due to the influence of the teachers. I like this kind of style. This work deals with water, and the treatment of ear ringing sounds when swimming is very meticulous. But I didn't have very strong feelings after watching it. The work deals with very personal feelings, so I was not able to identify with it. I was only able to enjoy the visual and sounds. It would definitely be better to see it in the cinema, because I didn't feel much when watching it alone.
- Lo: The overall execution of art direction, overall animation and sound effects is very good and uniform. I can see that it is a very personal work that expresses the creator's feelings. To me, it is a relatively plain and quiet work, without many messages. There are many elements in the work, but we can't feel them because they represent the director's personal feelings, which are not fully expressed. It is a plain, but nevertheless nice-looking work.
- Ho: The work touched me a lot. It deals with very internal feelings. If a person feels that he can't integrate into society, they could appreciate this work. The first time I saw it, I wrote some comments. Nothing much happens in the story, but for people with this kind of personality, buying a cup of coffee and facing other people are big events in their lives. I felt the work is well done, the animation and art direction are good. If you can identify with the emotions of the protagonist, you will understand that every conversation with people in ordinary life is a big deal. I can identify with this and I like it very much. If you have had similar experiences, this work will resonate with you. The visuals are beautiful to look at.
- Kong: My feelings are similar to that of Ka-ho. The film does a great job describing inner feelings and underwater sounds. In terms of its creative imagination, the way it visualizes certain scenes and the design of characters, the originality is a little bit lacking. I like it, but compared to other works, it is not very special.
- Hsieh: This is also the work of a Taiwan Art University student. The editing, visuals and composition are very powerful. I agree with what Ka-ho said. The creator really wants to express the feeling of people suffering from emotional illness and how they turn small things into big matters, which is very good. The creator is still a student and has a lot of potential. As a student work, it is quite okay.
- Fan: The next work is *BALLOONS*.
- Mak: This work uses minimalist means to make animations. Perhaps it's a student work. The story is simple to grasp. It reminds me of another work, *The Employment*, both are slow-paced and relatively static, but there are more variations in *The Employment*, with more job types represented, and it also expresses people's statuses and identities at work and home. I don't want to compare the two works, but in this film, the variations are smaller and talks about work environments only. It is simple and direct, and expresses the message behind it well.
- Lo: I think the story is too minimal, a bit too simple. It is very short and without much impact. Although I knew what he wanted to say, in terms of expression, it is just a balloon floating up and down. With balloons, you can imagine certain specific expressions, and there are no surprises. This metaphor is very normal, and the use of black and white is very visual. The movements are small and intricate, but I still feel that it is too simple.
- Ho: I feel the same. I think the work has too little content. There are only two or three scenes with

story content. There is a person withdrawing money, a mother and a child are floating and sinking. Except for these, the other scenes are very slow. There is only one message, which is that working makes people feel heavy. This single point is not enough to support a few minutes long animation.

Hsieh: I also think it is too simple.

Kong: My feelings are similar. When I saw it for the first time, I liked its artistic direction, largely because of the tasteful visuals, but compared to other works in this competition, it is too simple and I can't find any depth. My feelings are similar to everyone else's.

Fan: If there are no further comments, let's move on to the next work, *Kill Danny*.

Ho: It's a work worth talking about. I find it very interesting. The creator said that what he wants to express most is "fun." In fact, you watch this animation for its sense of fun, which is to fight and kill and pay tribute to old movies. If you look at it from the animation production perspective, it's not very good, but the creators are not after refinement, they just want to have fun. If that's what they are after, they could do better with the editing and rhythm. Some details are either deliberately not explained or left out. The protagonist's background is not explained. I saw on the director's Instagram that he will explain why he omitted certain things in the story. As far as animation production is concerned, I think certain aspects can help tell the story better, especially the editing. Some parts feel too long, like the fight on the train. If the director just wants people to have fun watching it, then he has succeeded.

Hsieh: I also like this animation very much. I didn't expect everyone else to like it. The fighting scenes are not easy to do. There is a lot of humor and refreshing designs. The director has succeeded in this respect, but the editing can be improved. Some of the fight scenes go on for too long and become a bit boring, but it is a very successful and funny animation.

Lo: It is a very self-gratifying work. The creator just wants to express the possibility of animation by including scenes from their favorite Hong Kong movies. They are greedy and may not have too much experience, so the handling of some scenes is not good enough, while some scenes can be shortened and certain movements are not handled well. The work is too long, although there is a lot to look at. It is not balanced, but because of its length, the audience will not go away disappointed; there is plenty that is fun to watch. Despite some flaws, it still deserves to be treasured. It does not have any special themes or story. It keeps your attention because of what goes on in each scene, and the story is carried forward with action scenes. This is hard to do and a rare achievement.

Ho: I want to say one more thing. Although its length is a shortcoming, I think the film is crazy. When we make animation, we usually try to make it shorter, but this creator is not afraid to make it long, so I think it is laudable.

Lo: They sure work hard.

Mak: I think this is a youthful work. Mature works tend to be calculated based on experience, and must consider budget constraints. Compared with this work, some films may also have calculated intentions, but are unable to achieve them due to insufficient experience. Lo Sir said that it may not be very balanced. But in unexpected places, one can see the time and effort they put in. It is a work of passionate youths. The story is fragmented and scattered, but this is not what the creator cares about. They like old Hong Kong movies, which still affects people from this generation. This is a good idea, they put in elements that they like.

- Kong: It's a work with a very independent spirit, and embodies a "just do it" spirit. In competitions, I long to see this kind of work. Many works aim for perfection and completeness, but he does not care about these things. This spirit touches me a lot.
- Fan: The next work is *GUNKWORLD*.
- Ho: I don't have any special opinions about this work, I just find it interesting.
- Lo: I don't really appreciate it.
- Hsieh: I think it's funny. I only just realized it's a Singaporean work, I assumed it was Japanese. Sometimes one sees animations like these that don't play by the rules in film festivals. It is a very special addition on this list, and even though I may not select it in the end, it is very special and fun.
- Ho: It might be interesting to edit it into small segments and put them on Instagram.
- Mak: Or turn them into a four-panel comics or short comics. I'm not sure if the creator has simply turned illustrations or comics into animations. The work is fragmentary, but each part is beautiful and interesting, and it's hard to feel satisfied after watching it because it's too fragmented. I don't know whether the final ending wants me rationally understand or analyze it. It seems unreasonable, but it seems that it is not crazy or parodic enough, it's neither here nor there. Of course, it is very interesting and playful. The advertisement is very interesting and is infused with many different cultural characteristics. This is what makes it special.
- Kong: I like this work, but I also understand everyone's criticism of it. My feelings are mixed. I agree with everyone's criticism, but I still like it very much.
- Ho: If you like it, you like it.
- Fan: The next work is *HereAfter*.
- Lo: This work has many shortcomings. The script can be better written. There are two worlds, one is the world of heaven and soul, the other the world of humans, and there is also the part involving memories, so the balance of these three parts is very important and not easy to achieve. There are only four characters, and I think it's a bit inconsistent. In terms of art and design, sometimes they are funny, sometimes they are not. The handling is a bit inadequate, the director has insufficient experience, and some emotional expressions are not very good. I think there is a problem with the dubbing. There are too many sounds like "ahh" and "ehh", which are useless. It can be better.
- Ho: When I watched it, I knew it was a student work. As a student work, it should get an "A". You said that there are many details that have not been executed well. I also talked about this in the last meeting. The director wanted to create a worldview, but he was not able to connect the two worlds properly. There are also some problems with the animation, which may due to the work having been done in haste. If the director can spend a year fine-tuning these details, it will be better for him to resubmit it next year. But we can't give him credit just because it's a student work. In terms of animation, he did a good job overall. Although the storytelling is not very good, there are many things that are solid, such as using a different drawing style in the memory part. This kind of treatment is relatively dull. The design is nice to look at, but it'd be better if there are more details. The moving graphics at the beginning is meant to attract the audience, but there are not enough frames, so it is a flaw.

- Mak: This is a work by a student from our school. We quite admire the story, which is very touching. But as you said, I think it was completed in haste, which is apparent especially in the second half with the plot and detailed arrangements. This work is not too different from others. It tells a story in a conventional way, which's difficult to do well. In addition, the lack of time and manpower means that some of the details are not handled well, and there are not too many fresh perspectives. The aesthetics is not above average. I was expecting something special, but it never appeared.
- Hsieh: Technically, it is clear that this is a student work. In the second half, some shots are not completely drawn. But I think the scene design is a success, and I was drawn to it from the very beginning. The paper offerings tied to the roofs of houses are beautifully designed and successfully executed. I agree with what everyone said about the rest.
- Kong: I really want to compare *Kill Danny* with this work, not visually, but comparing it with a student film. In fact, the resources enjoyed by Hong Kong independent animations are hardly more than graduation films. I am just using my intuition to compare the two works, since I don't know the creators. Whether a work can be done well depends on the pre-production. The preparation of *Kill Danny* can be very simple. If they have the ability and resources, it can take longer, but if not, it doesn't matter. But for *HereAfter*, it needs to have a great deal of pre-production, you need to have good arrangement, time management and production. This is a problem often encountered by independent productions, which can be seen in this work. This concept behind this work is very good, but it is not fully realized with strong production capability.
- Ho: I think the creator wants to construct a world view. In terms of independent production, he has achieved it. He has a worldview, but not one with much detail. It is important for there to be adequate pre-production at the beginning to figure out how to tell the story well.
- Fan: The next work is *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*, which is a Lebanese work.
- Lo: The idea of this work is very interesting, about a person becoming a chair. The relationship between a chair and a person leaves a lot to the imagination. You can sit on it or carry it on your back. This is a very interesting metaphor. There are many small details in the film that allows people to see the changes in the old granny, and one can also see the relationship between her and the servant, but overall, there is only one idea and not much more. For example, when changing into a chair, a person's face may change, but are there other areas that also undergo changes? The creator could have dug deeper. What relationship does this chair have with its surroundings? You can fill in a lot more detail. If developed well, this can even be a feature film. Now there's just one idea, that she changes into a chair and that's it. I think it's not enough. But its art, settings, and character design are all good, leaving you with a deep impression at first glance. The subject matter could be very moving, but I wasn't touched.
- Ho: I didn't understand the story too much the first time I saw it, and then I watched it the second time. The first time around, it feels a little scary, because the servant is portrayed as an animal. I wondered if I understood their culture, perhaps that's the way they view servants? This family has some problems. Everyone ignores the old granny. But this point is not expressed well. At first, I only assumed they are naughty and noisy kids, but later I realized this family has a big problem. When watching it the first time, I focused on the servant, because the character looks a bit scary. When I read the director's statement again, I realized that the creator wanted to talk about the relationship between the servant and the old granny. She always regards her as an animal, but in the end, the servant sticks around to look after her. It is easy to move people with stories about families, but this is not well portrayed in the animation. Its style is very unique, however.
- Lo: If you didn't read the director's statement, would you understand the story?

- Ho: That's right, I wouldn't have understood. It is a pity that this is not expressed in the animation.
- Mak: I also agree with what everyone has said. Some details of its story are not expressed clearly, but I was touched by the film, probably because of my own experiences. The changes in the relationship between the old granny is shown through changes of the chair, which I was able to appreciate as the animation progressed. I don't like the ending when everyone walks off with the chair. Can this be expressed better? But I do like this work, but as you said, there are some details that can be improved.
- Hsieh: I was also touched by this work, perhaps due to my personal experiences. I was touched by the story about taking care of the elderly, it resonated with me. It is not so perfect, but it touched me.
- Kong: My views are similar to everyone else's. The process of turning her chair into a chair is a bit insubstantial. I like the design, character relationships and visuals.
- Fan: The last work is *Closet*.
- Lo: I don't like this very much. It's nothing new, just about a person who shuts himself off from the world. Many young people are like this now. It's a big problem. But there are no new points of view that the creator brings out. In terms of animation performance, it's a bit strange. The protagonist's world is filled with texts, but I don't know why they are all in Japanese. The use of text is not very effective, they just occupy the screen. They raise some questions, but offer no particular opinions. It is not meaningful enough.
- Ho: I really need to chat with the director to find out what her intentions are. I want to ask why she uses VR. If you use VR, you should make use of this media to tell a story. But now it doesn't seem to be relevant. I don't know why she chooses to do things this way, why we end up in the cinema at the end. I don't quite understand. Then, at the end when the skeleton comes out, it is too straightforward. All along, we don't really understand what's going on, and then when the skeleton and the text come out, it is too direct. I think it's better to leave it to the audience's imagination. I find the work interesting, even though I don't understand what she is doing.
- Mak: I like it when the skeleton comes out of the closet, which brings to life the phrase "coming out of the closet". This sort of thing can only be expressed through animation. The use of this twist makes the work interesting. I don't understand what she wants to say in the end, is she deliberately hiding the meaning, or making the audience think? There is not much for me to think. I like the character who wants to communicate with others but at the same time wants to hide from people. Talking about one's childhood experience is nothing special, but it caused me to reflect. I like the ending, which matches the theme of "coming out", but only the creator knows the precise meaning. She also has a VR version. Is she only trying out this new media, or did she really make use of the 360-degree perspective? I'm not sure if VR helps the work a lot.
- Hsieh: This is a Taiwanese work. This version is not VR. The drawing is a bit ordinary, but the concept is good concept. There is a sense of suspense at the beginning, which makes me want to find out what will happen to her. The protagonist feels nothing even when the girl undresses in front of him, and his parents do not allow him to go out. I don't know why the ending is like this. Why the use of skeleton? Because it is a student work, the idea may not be conveyed accurately. But she manages to create a sense of suspense that makes me want to find out what happens at the end. The scriptwriter is successful in this regard.
- Kong: My views are similar to everyone else's. What I care more about is the visuals and how it matches

with the art design and atmosphere of the film, and the relationship between these elements are not too close. The visual texture and the film's atmosphere don't line up. I care more about this.

Ho: Hearing you say that, I have a question for everyone. Do you think that the style of this film is related to the topic? This is a very cute style. Does it match the content?

Kong: The work is very cute, but the contrast between the style and content is not big enough. If the cuteness is related to the darkness of the theme, I would appreciate it. But now the style is too normal.

Fan: After discussing all ten works one after another, now do you have any works you want to nominate for the prizes? We can talk about the distribution of awards.

Lo: We can each choose three works and see what works are included.

Fan: In order to narrow the choices, everyone can pick some works that you think are worth discussing, or if there are works worthy of the Gold award, you can nominate them directly.

Mak: I think *Kill Danny* is the most unique work among the finalists. There are a few other works that are complete and calculated, but this one is the most youthful and carefree. I don't know if it should get Gold, Silver or Special Mention. Another choice is *Mountains and Seas - Village of Muds*, which is a very complete and beautiful work.

Lo: Aside from *Kill Danny* and *Mountains and Seas - Village of Muds*, do you have other award nominations?

Mak: The others are pretty similar for me.

Kong: I have made my choice. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, *GUNKWORLD* and *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*. I am open to discussions. My overall feeling is that all the works are pretty good on average.

Ho: It's a tough choice. I have chosen three. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, my main consideration is independent spirit. Also, *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*, both these works are strongly independent. And *Buoy*.

Hsieh: My choices are the same as Ka Ho.

Lo: My choices are these three: *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, *Buoy* and *Kill Danny*.

Mak: I am leaning towards *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*, even though *Buoy* is also close, but I don't have much feelings for it, I feel more for the former.

Fan: Now we have narrowed our choices. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, *Buoy*, *Kill Danny*, *GUNKWORLD* and *How My Grandmother Became A Chair* all received votes. Works that received the most votes are not necessarily the best. Among these 5 works, which one do you nominate for Gold Award?

Ho: Actually, I feel that *BLANKET TALK* is also very good, but my quota is used up.

Lo: ifva does not have many awards, just Gold and Silver. Sometimes we give out two Special Mentions as encouragement because there are many good works. I choose *Kill Danny* as the Gold

Award. For ifva, independent production methods and ideas are very important elements.

Fan: Lo Sir nominated *Kill Danny* as the Gold Award, right? Kong Kee hasn't made his choice yet.

Kong: I have no objections.

Hsieh: I choose *How My Grandmother Became A Chair* because it is very touching. Although drawing skills of the work are not too special, when the chair slowly changes, it is just like the granny slowly aging while the outside world is also changing. I feel the creator's concerns for old people, which moved me.

Fan: There are now two nominations for the Gold Award.

Kong: I think *Kill Danny* is good, but I haven't decided which work should get Gold Award. I need some time to think it through.

Ho: I think *Kill Danny* is independent. In terms of artistic merit, it is not higher than other works. It is just a purely fun animation. Other works have some messages, but *Kill Danny* has none. I prefer works with messages and some artistic merit. Previously, I had wanted to give *Kill Danny* the Special Mention.

Lo: I have heard comments by some people about ifva's award-winning works in the past. Many works that we judge to have independent spirit are not so good artistically. Maybe they are student works, so they were forgiven because they were very passionate. Perhaps this is the spirit of ifva, but it is a competition after all, and it should strike a balance between various aspects. ifva is a benchmark that allows people to measure the quality of works, so I think finding a balance is very important. *Kill Danny* has its own problems. We should choose winners from among the five that are good in all aspects and are more representative.

Kong: When we discuss *Kill Danny*, we emphasize that it is very passionate, but *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is also passionate, it's just that the former is a little bit more so. The time and cost invested in the latter shows how passionate the creators are, but the story is not a linear one. If I were to choose, I would give *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* higher marks than *Kill Danny*. You can't ignore a work's strengths just because you like another one more. My dilemma is choosing between *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* and *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*. The former feels strongly of a first episode. When other people see *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, would they understand why we chose it? Would they be surprised that the pilot episode of a series won a prize? Its story is very moving. How can we compare it with *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*, what criteria should we use? The two are very different works.

Ho: The most awkward thing is that *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is considered more commercial. Frankly speaking, it is the best animation among the finalists, but I don't know whether its independent spirit and creative intentions conflict with the principles of ifva. I don't know how to judge.

Lo: Some people may think that since *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is a commercial work on the surface, why should ifva give it an award? But from another point of view, *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* surely has certain intentions, but it is not easy to convey profound and distinct themes within a commercial work. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* manages to achieve this. Looking at it from another angle, it conveys certain unique ideas, which fit well with the spirit of ifva. It is not an ordinary commercial TV drama, nor is it something that you watch and then quickly forget. *How My Grandmother Became A Chair* is obviously a very meaningful

work. It takes up a good metaphor that of a person becoming a chair, but the expression can be better, although it is already not bad.

- Mak: *Kill Danny* and *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* are my favorite works. As Ka-ho said, they represent a balance between two aspects. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is calculated and well-rounded, while *Kill Danny* is strange, fragmented and incomplete. Which one you like is a matter of personal preference, some people like distinctive works, others like more mainstream works with a twist. After listening to your opinions, I prefer *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*. At first, I was a bit hesitant about choosing such a commercial film for ifva. However, as a commercial work, it has introduced some variety into the genre, and it is more complete than *Kill Danny*, so even from the perspective of ifva, *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is the more superior work. The two are actually very close. This decision is very personal.
- Hsieh: I was touched by *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*. I feel it is a brilliant work.
- Lo: The dialogue is well-written, with few wasted words. This work won a prize last year at Japan's DigiCon6. Even though the Japanese saw the work with subtitles, they were able to feel the power of the work, which is remarkable.
- Mak: Giving the Gold Award to *Kill Danny* seems unsatisfactory. It's better if the creator was able to tie up the fragmentary segments with a story. Now it just feels unsatisfying.
- Kong: What Lo Sir said has convinced me. Comparing *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* with *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*, the latter has not done its best within its own confines, while *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* made me feel it has exceeded itself. My ranking is as follows: Gold Award for *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, Silver Award for *How My Grandmother Became A Chair* and Special Mention for *Kill Danny*.
- Lo: Some works let you come away satisfied. *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is more than 10 minutes long. After watching it, I think I have received some messages and I feel satisfied. *How My Grandmother Became A Chair* is just a little off the mark, and that's the difference. In terms of awards, Kong Kee's choices are acceptable to me.
- Ho: If you think *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is compatible with ifva, then I go along with Kong Kee. I think we should talk about *Buoy* a bit more. It is also very beautiful.
- Lo: Can we give Special Mention to *Buoy*?
- Fan: Why don't we decide on the three works first?
- Ho: I would like to say a few more words about *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*. Every time I hear a line of dialogue, I would look back at the animation. Not only do I feel satisfied, I can see how the dialogue matches the animation. If there is no conflict with ifva competition, I think *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* is an outstanding work.
- Lo: I think there is no conflict, but the reason why I picked *Kill Danny* as the Gold Award at the beginning is because of what people had said about ifva winners in the past few years. That is, they feel that ifva is mainly about independent films, and independent means different from commercial films or using different means of expressions compared to commercial works. If it is a student work and the technique is not good, it doesn't matter because it is independent. So, if a film like *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* received an award, some people will query why such a commercial film won ifva, but if *Kill Danny* won, no one will say anything. But if you

compare the two films, you can see the difference. If you understand what is distinctive about each work, you should recognize what is good about *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*, and you will agree that it deserves the Gold Award. Among the ten works, it is the best in its animation technique.

Fan: I should add some information about ifva's concept of independent spirit. Every competition has its own stance and unique features. Over many years, ifva has believed that independence and originality are our most cherished elements. As Lo Sir pointed out, in the past, animations with outstanding styles tend to win, but ifva has 5 categories in total, such as the Open Category and Asian New Force. Works in these categories are very professional even compared to so-called commercial works, with very polished techniques and narrative forms. In the juror's notes each year, we mention the qualities that we think are important, but will not specify the weighting of each criterion. Depending on the current situation and social atmosphere, people will have different opinions of the works. For example, the way you compared the three works had never happened in the past, and may be due to the current situation of Hong Kong and Asian animation scene. Back to the current situation, we have been discussing these three works, it is better to decide on them before dealing with the others. Mr. Hsieh, you mentioned that your nomination for the Gold Award is *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*.

Hsieh: I changed my mind. Now my choice for Gold Award is *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud*.

Fan: So *Mountains and Seas - Village of Mud* will get Gold. Do you all agree? If so, should Silver go to *How My Grandmother Became A Chair*?

(The jurors agree.)

Fan: Should *Kill Danny* get Special Mention?

(The jurors agree.)

Fan: Now that we have made a decision about the three films, how about *Buoy*? Ka-ho, would you like to lobby the other jurors?

Ho: *Buoy* is highly artistic and is beautifully made. But its story is not detailed. The creator uses this animation to bring out some messages and the animation technique is good. Dealing with water also takes courage because it is hard to do. Among all the works, the technique of this one is the best.

Fan: Neither Vincent (Mak Shing-fung) nor Kong Kee chose *Buoy*.

Mak: If you compare *Kill Danny* to *Buoy*, the former uses elements from Hong Kong movies and contains a variety of action scenes, so it is more impactful. *Buoy* is beautiful, but I don't have strong feelings for it, even though the visuals and sound are well done. In terms of impact, *Kill Danny* is much greater. If I have to choose just one, I would choose *Kill Danny*.

Hsieh: A gentle film like *Buoy* is at a disadvantage in a competition like this.

Ho: Can we have two Special Mentions?

Fan: It's not impossible, but it's best if we keep it to one. If you think the two works are of similar quality, we can consider giving two Special Mentions, but from your previous discussions, it seems that people prefer one over the other.

Animation Category Award Winners

Gold Award

Mountains and Seas - Village of Muds

Nicboy
(Hong Kong)

Silver Award

How My Grandmother Became A Chair

Nicolas Fattouh
(Lebanon)

Special Mention

Kill Danny

Leung Chun-tat, Law Lok-hei, Wu Hau-chung
(Hong Kong)