

ICAS 12 Film Festival

21 – 28 August 2021

Curated by Mario Lopez
Associate Professor at



Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Kyoto University



THE 12TH INTERNATIONAL
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ICAS 12 Film Festival

Asia is one of the world's richest areas for diversity and has undergone intense and rapid transformation over in the first two decades of the 21st century. How these changes are captured by filmmakers help stimulate dialogues on issues that people hold close to them in everyday life. For ICAS 12 the [Visual Documentary Project](#) has teamed up for a second time to offer a selection of works from across Asia and other parts of the world. We offer a diverse selection of contemporary documentaries and films that touch upon issues of justice, love, popular culture, memory across Asia and further afield. We also provide a wide range of works that show how engaged Asia is in global society. As this year's event is brought to you from Kyoto Japan, the event has a Japanese theme. We bring together works by Japanese filmmakers working in Japan and across Asia to highlight the different approaches to issues in the region. This time round we showcase how not only filmmakers and academics, but also students use visual mediums to bring out issues of social relevance. We provide a strong selection of short animated films courtesy of the [Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation](#), Tokyo University of Arts.

Finally, while putting this program together, a young aspiring Burmese filmmaker, Aye Chan ([The Father I Knew 2020](#)) who gave us permission to screen her work passed away in an accident. We dedicate this year's selection to her.

Festival Curator

The ICAS 12 Film Festival is curated by Mario Lopez, Associate Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University. He is the secretariat head of the visual documentary project (VDP) and works on migration and sustainability matters within Southeast Asia. He previously curated the ICAS 10 Film Festival.

Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University

[The Center for Southeast Asian Studies \(CSEAS\)](#) conducts research in Southeast Asia to formulate and pursue original research agendas. Through integrated area studies it seeks to develop research frameworks that develop from extensive fieldwork on the region's diversity. Currently, CSEAS is promoting trans-disciplinary collaborative research to form collaborative academic communities that work toward life-oriented research approaches attuned to regional diversity; create socially innovative approaches to the needs of the environment; and share and use global information resources with the regional and global academic world. Since 2012, CSEAS has supported the Visual Documentary Project (VDP) which provides a platform for Southeast Asian and Japanese filmmakers to share documentaries to a broader public. This project aims to use visual forms of expression to complement the growing literature that exists on Southeast Asian societies and build bridges between academia and filmmaking in the region.

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A Remembering of Disremembering

Director: Cris Bringas

Year: 2019

Length: 18 minutes

Location: Philippines

Told through the tales of love of a retiring film projectionist and a late-blooming actress, the short documentary delves into the journey of Manila's oldest movie theater from grandiosity to obsolescence.



Director's Bio

Cris Bringas is a Filipino filmmaker and part-time student who is finishing his Master's degree in Film at the University of the Philippines Film Institute. His short films have screened and competed in Europe, South America, South Korea, and Southeast Asia, and his film projects have also won in pitching competitions in his home country. His works explore memory, history, and identity in relation to space; and he plays with various genres such as hybrid and speculative fiction to subvert these concepts.

Since leaving his corporate job in 2018 to focus on filmmaking, he has worked as a production assistant and screenwriter for both narrative and documentary projects, while building up his film practice through organizations such as Daang Dokyu, a festival of Philippine documentaries, where he served as a researcher and programming assistant; and workshops such as CinePanulat, the screenwriting lab of Jun Robles Lana, where he won outstanding screenplay award.

Why did you make this documentary?

The film was born out of my fascination for old spaces and buildings—the remains of colonisation. As a millennial, I watched films in standalone cinemas as well as mall cinemas, and have a sense of how the two spaces compare. I made this film during the Centennial Year of Philippine Cinema in 2019, when our film industry was focused on celebrating movies and icons. No one wanted to talk about space, so I decided to make my work spatial-focused. In this project, I ask, "What purpose do stand-alone cinemas serve in contemporary Filipino society?" Defaced, politicized, personalized, or simply ignored and forgotten, they now stand for everything that they are not.

Viewed through the lens of the ones who have witnessed the TIMES theater's rise to fame and melancholic downfall, *A Remembering of Disremembering* offers an understanding of Filipino's habits and spaces of film spectatorship as weaved into the urban fabric and which allows for social, historical, and cultural critique.

A Simple Love Story

Director: Hnin Pa Pa Soe

Year: 2020

Length: 21min

A Simple Love Story is a documentary film that follows a not so simple love between a tomboy and transvestite man in modern day Myanmar. It traces the tensions that the couple faces and places them at the heart of issues in Burmese society: how can transgender people negotiate their love in society that has yet to embrace their differences?



Director's Bio

Hnin Pa Pa Soe was born in 1990 in Myanmar and came to terms with her sexuality at the age of 12. However, she was not able to come out openly due to many hardships, restrictions and discriminations in her community. She graduated in psychology and after graduation joined numerous human rights, women rights, gender-based violence workshops and trainings as well as actively participated in various youth activities and LGBT led activities as a volunteer. In 2016, she started shooting A Simple Love Story and it won the "Best Documentary Award" at the Wathann Film Festival in 2017. Although receiving the best documentary award, the film wasn't allowed to be shown by local authorities, due to dialogue at the end. The award and subsequent attention received over her refusal to abide by the censor's demands made her a celebrated advocate for LGBT rights in Myanmar.



Team Member's Bios

Lei Lei Aye is a lesbian film maker as well as a camera woman. She had made several LGBT films and others that promoted women rights. She had worked as sound recorder for A Simple Love Story. She has also worked on My Mother is Single (2014), Soulmates (2014), The Storyteller (2015) and Valley Flower (2016).



Aung San is Kachin and graduated from Human Rights Film School. He left his family behind in order to pursue his passion for film works and has been struggling to become a freelance cinematographer in Yangon.

Why did you make this documentary?

My work counters the mis-categorization of LGBT characters usually seen in Myanmar's mainstream films. I was a trainee at a film workshop in 2017. During this, I was responsible to finish a film project. After searching for a suitable story, I decided to direct a documentary film based on a love story between my two transgender friends. It was such a unique story that I could not pass up the chance

to cover it. It is a love story between a transgender man and a transwoman that challenges norms surrounding gender identity. However, Burmese society is unable to accept the LGBT community. Until now, LGBTQIA+ are struggling under the pressure of discrimination. Despite these struggles, love between a transgender man and a transgender woman is unacceptable not only by society but also within the LGBTQIA+ community itself. I would like to point out the fact that love has no gender.



About Us

Director: Chanintorn Pensute

Year: 2020

Length: 19 minutes

This is the story about a Chiang Mai student and his friends. It deals with his day-to-day life stories and challenges as copes with a disability. Is Chiang Mai suitable for everyone? This is a story about living with disability in Chiang Mai.

ABOUT US เรื่องของเรา



Director's Bio

Chanintorn Pensute is a lecturer at Chiang Mai University. She graduated from the School of Politics and International Studies, University of Leeds in 2015. Since 2018, she started to direct and produce short documentaries which focus on social issues.

Why did you make this documentary?

I decided to make this documentary because currently I teach a module on "Citizenship." This module changed my life completely and when I met a student; Dew, he inspired me in so many ways, so I decided to make a documentary about him and his friends.

Ambon: A Return to Peace

Directors: Zainal Abidin Bagir and Robert W. Hefner

Year: 2020

Length: 34 minutes

Location: Indonesia

Film website: [Indonesian Pluralities - Film Series](#)

This documentary highlights the efforts of women, youth and grassroots organizations to bring about Christian-Muslim reconciliation and a return to peaceful co-existence today, some twenty years after the worst of the ethnoreligious violence in Ambon City, Maluku, Indonesia. The Ambon conflict was one of several outbreaks of bitter communal violence in Indonesia which erupted in the years following the end of the New Order in 1998 and Indonesia's return to democracy. The conflict raged between 1999 and 2002 and took no less than five thousand lives while displacing a half million people. This 35-minute film highlights the grassroots efforts undertaken by women, youth, and religious leaders to re-build inter-religious relations in the aftermath of the conflict and in the face of lingering trauma and residential segregation.



Directors' Bios



Zainal Abidin Bagir teaches religious studies at the Graduate School of Universitas Gadjah Mada and is currently the Director of the Indonesian Consortium for Religious Studies.

Robert Hefner is professor of anthropology and global affairs at Boston University. He is the president of the American Institute for Indonesian Studies (AIFIS) and the former president (2009-2010) of the Association for Asian Studies.



Why did you make this documentary?

Ambon: A Return to Peace is the second documentary film in the Indonesian Pluralities series. The series explores the cultural, religious, ethnic and gender diversity in Indonesia, both its rich promise and threats, and the ongoing challenges of democracy and civic co-existence in such a context. The series portrays Indonesia as a dynamic site of great promise and disputes about what Indonesia is, and what it should best become. This film series is the story of unfinished but hopeful Indonesia.

The *Ambon: A Return to Peace* film portrays exactly that complexity. Ambon was a story of bitter conflict, but now also a story of how peace may return — thanks to the struggle of the people — and its ongoing challenges. Supported by the Henry Luce Foundation (New York), the series is produced by the Center for Religious and Cross-cultural Studies at Gadjah Mada University; the Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University; and Watchdoc Documentary Films.

An Unquiet Land

Director: Nguyen Thi Khanh Ly

Year: 2019

Length: 28 minutes

Owning a piece of land of more than 1000 square meters in An Phu Ward, Thu Thiem, New Urban Project of Ho Chi Minh City, Mrs. Hong, age 74 was lucky enough to have her land lot spared from being razed, while her five children were not. Her only wish now is to be able to keep the land for herself and the children.



Director's Bio

Nguyen Thi Khanh Ly is an independent documentary filmmaker based in Ho Chi Minh City and an experienced reporter for the last 4 years for VnExpress, the most popular online newspaper in Viet Nam. She is currently working as a communications executive in Da Nang. She directed her first documentary film *Below the Boulevard* (2016), a story of a veteran with disabilities, nearly 60 years old, who is living in a boat in Ho Chi Minh City since the Republic regime of Vietnam, founded on the hope for a better future for their little daughter. In 2017, she was selected as one of 10 fellow ASEAN filmmakers for a filmmaking workshop at the Luang Prabang Film Festival, in which she directed the documentary film *The Giving*.

Editor's Bio

Nguyen Thu Huong is an independent filmmaker based in Ho Chi Minh. She graduated from Hoa Sen University as a Media Producer and is interested in documentary films since she thinks they are the best way to deeply explore modes of human emotion and experience and the ways they interplay with problems in society. Besides working as a media producer, she took a documentary filmmaking course in the Ateliers Varan Workshop and made her first documentary film *Immortal Angel* (2016) as a director.



Why did you make this documentary?

I'm not a native of Saigon and moved here 10 years ago. Thu Thiem is on the other side of the bridge, separated from where I live by a river. My daily commute is a sensory overloaded journey through the chaos of bulldozers and excavators, where the crashing, clanking, and banging seem to be able to tear through the very last makeshift houses that are hanging on to this seemingly gigantic construction site. Thu Thiem is changing by the day. The new buildings that appear to scrape the sky seem to be on the verge of swallowing those little houses, and yet they remain. Their perseverance posed a big question for me. Why the insistence on staying here in their little oases? The first time I met Mrs. Hong, she was wearing a 'nón lá' (Vietnamese conical style hat), standing in front of her house, an image that was starkly juxtaposed by the other side of the river - glamorous District 1 with its skyscrapers. At 74, she had spent 13 years of her life fighting for the land she plans to keep for her five children. I started out with curiosity and Ms. Hong opened the door to a different world, where I unexpectedly got sucked into a saga of common people fighting a legal battle against the government. They are the modern-day Don Quixotes who have picked an almost impossible battle with giant windmills, and yet refuse to give up.

Art Attack

Director: Nils Clauss

Year: 2018

Length: 21 minutes

Location: South Korea

The Demilitarised Zone, in short DMZ, is a buffer zone between North and South Korea where only soldiers patrol. Within spitting distance of this military hotspot each year a range of international artists take part in a residency programme in a small South Korean village called Yangjiri. Each year their artistic practices culminates in an exhibition in and around the village. The outcome of this festival-like event and the relations between the artists and the villagers, range somewhere between documentary and fiction. Not only is communication difficult, but there is also a clash of cultures and values. A small village at the border to North Korea is turned upside down for the sake of what could be understood as pretentious art. What we see is a certain surreality, perhaps even in keeping with the character of the DMZ, which has divided North and South Korea for 65 years.



Director's Bio

Based in Seoul, South Korea, **Nils Clauss** has shot, directed and edited a number of award-winning music videos, short, feature and documentary films, which have been screened at various international festivals or distributed online. He created a number of hit music videos like "Senior Living" for the Norwegian band Röyksopp which was selected for the prestigious Saatchi & Saatchi's New Directors' Showcase at Cannes and received a nomination at the UK Music Video Awards.

Why did you make this documentary?

ART ATTACK is a short documentary shot in a small Korean village called Yangji-ri located just south of the border with North Korea. Every year the Seoul based gallery Art Sonje hosts a contemporary art festival in this very rural area and the public are carried on buses into and out of Yangji-ri. Since the gallery also runs an artist residency programme in Yangji-ri, the participating artists are invited to stay there for their art practices prior to the festival.

During the production of ART ATTACK, I spent a couple of days in Yangji-ri prior to and during the festival. The Goethe Institut Korea, which has been one of the sponsors of the festival kindly invited me to deliver my vision of this unique event. For me the most interesting thing about this event is not so much connected to the work of the artists, it is rather the 'behind the scenes' related events, where we really see how two different culture and belief systems clash. Even though the artists try to foster relationships with the villagers, the disconnect between the residents of Yangji-ri and their temporary international neighbours could not be stronger. ART ATTACK shows how a Western vision of art is imposed upon the villagers, who have a very different understanding of what art is. Since villagers' voices are not really heard, the audience is left with a sense of art colonialism. It is my belief that in this sense the culture industry, like any other, is marketing its products, the artist and curators, on the international stage.

I hope that ART ATTACK allows us to reflect on an international art circuit, which often comes across as pretentious. Furthermore, the film illustrates how interpersonal relationships are often exploited for one's personal success. I am well aware that my insight into the relationships between the artists and villagers has been very limited, since I only got to spend 6 days in Yangjiri to shoot the film. But while I was filming the documentary, I did not have a lot of preconceptions nor a fixed approach or storyline in my head. I tried to immerse myself into the situation without

being too judgmental nor taking sides with either the artists or the villagers. The story, as it is, was mainly contextualized in the edit. Here it made sense to juxtapose the artists with the villagers in order to contrast their views and opinions. The resulting film is a critical position on a globalized art world and its confrontation with a tiny village in Korea close to the Demilitarized Zone. A small corner of the world where people are probably not too concerned about art.

Despite the sometimes-heavy subject matter that touch on the Demilitarized Zone, art colonialism and difficult interpersonal relationships, I understand ART ATTACK merely as a comedic film. I had a lot of fun reviewing the footage during the editing process and some parts made me laugh out loud. To highlight humorous elements in the film, I basically had to divide and then lump together what can be summed up as the art world on the one hand, and the world of the villagers on the other. I hope that based on this editorial generalization none of the artists or villages in this film feel any of their personal rights are being violated and that they also look at this as a comedic film.

Banyak Ayam Banyak Rejeki (Many Chickens Lots of Luck)

Director: Riboet Akbar and Önar Önarsson

Year: 2020

Length: 102 minutes

Locations: Indonesia/Malaysia

Banyak Ayam Banyak Rejeki is a hybrid film that documents the growth of critical perspectives in three very different Indonesian women who happen to share the same husband. Made over 11 years in the city of Yogyakarta, the film's lengthy process compelled its participants to engage with social and political shifts that radically alter the courses of the narrative and their lives. Satire and humor are deployed as "safe" ways to address rapidly expanding Islamic conservatism and vigilantism and the complex effects of social media on individual agency.



The project began as an ill-fated promotional video for Indonesian street food icon and polygamist Arjun. Co-director Önar Önarsson, a Swedish graduate student researching local sex rituals, was soon hit on the head by a large Durian fruit. He awakened convinced he was Javanese, Arab blood accounting for his light skin. To the consternation of co-director Riboet Akbar, Önarsson became erratic, insisting they take a "feminist" approach by dramatizing the struggles of Arjun's wives in a public forum. The event—provocatively dubbed the Polygamy Awards—was a huge success for its organizers. But Arjun was bankrupted, and the film abandoned until his mysterious second wife re-emerged to resurrect the family's image.

Directors' Bios



Riboet Akbar was a legendary mobile cinema operator and emcee working in Yogyakarta and Central Java. Wiped out in the late 1980s by the spread of television and the exciting new "drilling" dances performed at Dangdut music shows, Akbar has since supported himself as an event videographer, promoter and multimedia impresario. His specialty is perking up flagging local food businesses with innuendos and sexualized imagery that he guarantees to increase sales. This is his first "art" film.

Önar Önarsson was a Swedish graduate student studying gender and power in Indonesia. After a tragic incident with a Durian, Önarsson developed a strange obsession with the late director Nya Abbas Akup, proclaiming him the "Marxist-feminist Ingmar Bergman of Indonesia." Driven to make similar films, his work with videographer Riboet Akbar quickly evolved into something far stranger, and possibly more real, than either could have imagined. Önarsson is currently hiding out in Malaysia under the pseudonym "Om Duck."



Why did you make this documentary?

In the vein of Jean Rouch and Kidlat Tahmik, Banyak Ayam Banyak Rejeki blurs the boundaries between documenting and intervening in reality, reaching beyond the form- and genre-based assumptions that shape the aesthetic worlds of documentary realism. Set in Indonesia and based on long-term ethnographic and archival research on the politics of gender in Southeast Asian media, the film chronicles the rise and fall of an iconic street vendor and entrepreneur in Yogyakarta, spanning the changeover from analog to digital media. Building on other

recent Southeast Asian “ethnofictions” (Karaoke Girl, Phantom of Illumination, Along the One Way), Banyak Ayam creatively deploys and combines fictionalized elements with non-fiction ones. The result is a critical, polyphonic engagement with the local practices of Islam, business, and polygamy. Dealing with politically and culturally sensitive topics, the film's method allows for levels of intimacy, “truth” and satire that would be difficult, and potentially problematic, to capture through more traditional documentary techniques. Principal filming took place in 2008-2009, with additional filming over the following eleven years in parallel with the filmmakers' ongoing scholarship and fieldwork. While unusual, this lengthy period of production and editing allowed the film to engage and absorb the shifting sights, sounds, and ideas of Yogyakarta, Indonesia across an entire decade, effectively positioning the project as an “archive.” Indeed, portions of the film’s narrative were reshaped in light of critical shifts in local social and political trends. Many of the concluding scenes, filmed over the last three years, address rapidly expanding Islamic conservatism and vigilantism, as well as the complex effects of social media on individual agency.

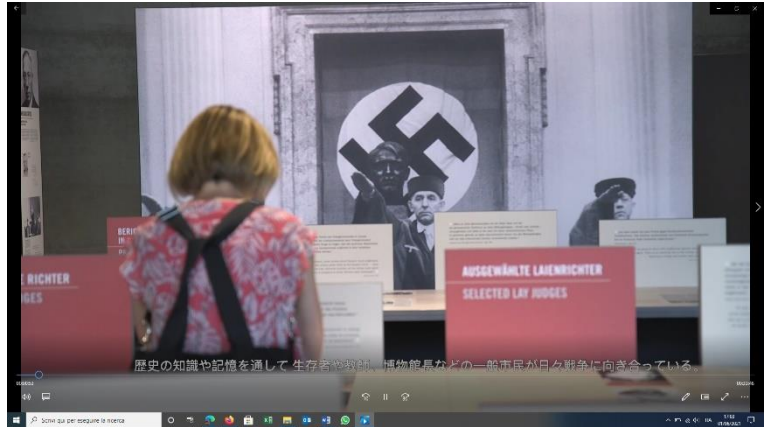
Civil Society and Reconciliation: Voices from post-war Japan, Germany and Italy

Director: Claudia Astarita

Year: 2019

Length: 34 minutes

For decades, official state-sanctioned apologies have been the preferred tool to help rebuild broken international bonds, but their effectiveness in fostering national reconciliation is debatable. What has become clear, though, is the role civil society has played in facilitating people's reflection upon the most rending aspects of their own past. From survivors, teachers to museum curators, ordinary people in Japan, Germany, and Italy are stepping into the vacuum and helping to bring formerly warring countries closer together.



Director's Bio

Claudia Astarita is assistant professor at Sciences Po Lyon, researcher at the Lyon's Institute of East Asian Studies (IAO). She is also an associate Fellow at the Asia Institute, the University of Melbourne, and International Relations Analyst for South Asia at CeMiSS, Centre for Military and Strategic Studies, in Rome. She obtained her Ph.D. in Asian Studies from Hong Kong University in early 2010. Her main research interests include China's political and economic development, Chinese and Indian Foreign policies, East Asian regionalism and regional economic integration, Asian Civil Society, and the role of media and memory (both official and unofficial) in reshaping historical narratives in Asia.

Why did you make this documentary?

The documentary has been produced to confirm, one more time, that lasting reconciliation with former enemies after a war is a difficult and often distressful process. Peace is not a top-down practice and the entire civil society must be involved to make it successful. Public discussion of Second World War crimes in West Germany, Italy and Japan in the post-war period was extremely sparse. By contrast, the Allies believed that they could free Europe and the Far East from "Nationalism and Militarism" by means of war crimes trials, de-fascistization and denazification. In fact, Germany and Italy had to wait until the 1960s to create, with the support of media and civil society, a lasting awareness on a shared national narrative of the Second World War. As a consequence, this documentary shows that only by establishing a mutually supportive connection between history and memory it becomes possible to spread new positive values and perspectives in civil society, triggering a virtuous and inclusive reconciliation process.

Cosplayer

Director: Yingsiwat Yamolyong

Year: 2014

Length: 27 minutes

This documentary delves into the little-known world of soldier cosplay subculture in Thailand. Presenting an intimate story of soldier cosplayers in Thai society, the documentary follows Jum, a man in his late twenties, who is passionate about soldier cosplay and explains how it came to be central in his life. Cosplayer provides a window on how manga, video games and movies are consumed in contemporary Thai society.



Director's Bio

Yingsiwat Yamolyong is a Bangkok-based independent filmmaker. He worked as second assistant director for Apichatpong Weerasethakul's films *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives* (2010) and *Cemetery of Splendour* (2015) and as first assistant director on *Ten years Thailand* (2018). His interests are in documentary, feature films and experimental films that find the best way to tell stories such as *The Bright Supernatural power of Nae Wat Doa* (2013) which comprised of experimental

footage films about Thai patriotic masculine hero films or documentary films such as *Cosplayer* (2014) that explored disrespect toward Thai sub-culture. Yingsiwat is now working on a script for his first long feature film.

Why did you make this documentary?

I think Cosplay is an interesting sub-culture in Thai society, as it derives from Japanese pop culture. However, many Thai teenagers (and also adult) love to represent themselves through non-Thai culture. This shows how cultural flows are marked by borders. In this documentary I am interested in soldier cosplayers as in cosplayer society they don't receive much respect. However, when I carried out research for the documentary, I found it fascinating from a historical perspective as when you are cosplaying as a soldier you have to know the history of the costume and know where to find items. This is because it is not a fantasy character per se that you can make by yourself. It requires specific knowledges that this group of people love to find and share between each other to be as "authentic" and "real" as possible. I believe that all cultures in this world are connected and affected in some or many ways, thus I also loved to uncover in this documentary how mainstream culture and some historical events shaped this sub-sub culture in Thailand's context.

DocWomentary: Women Behind the Lens

Director: Jayneca Reyes

Year: 2019

Length: 40 minutes

A filmmaker explores why women are at the forefront of documentary filmmaking in the Philippines by chronicling their narratives of struggle and victories as they navigate the masculine filmmaking industry. Throughout the film, she discovers her own reflexivity as a filmmaker but most importantly, as a woman.



Director's Bio

Jayneca Reyes is a documentary filmmaker and human rights activist with an MA in Media Studies (Film) from the University of the Philippines Diliman. She directed *Bagong Silang* (2016), a short documentary about the displaced urban poor; and produced *DocWomentary: Women Behind the Lens* (2019), which looks at women at the forefront of documentary filmmaking in the Philippines.

Why did you make this documentary?

Despite the observed rise of women in documentary filmmaking, there have been few attempts to document and examine their experience. Further exacerbating this gap in literature is the seeming absence of women's voices or perspectives as both subjects and/or framers of documentary filmmaking history in the Philippines. This is an affront to women's contribution not only to documentary filmmaking history but to film history in general and must be addressed.

As a woman documentary filmmaker myself, I have my fair share of personal experiences of harassment and discrimination in the industry and in society. However, I learned to stand and fight for what is right for me. One of the most important steps in asserting this right is by articulating my experiences for others, especially for women, to learn from – that what was done to me was wrong; that I did not invite it; and, I am not to blame. I learned that our stories are worth telling and I learned that the struggle for my right as a woman went beyond repelling physical attacks. It was addressing the entrenched and enduring norms of sexism, misogyny and male entitlement.

Gimbal

Director: Sidiq Ariyadi

Year: 2020

Length: 17 minutes

This documentary focuses on a farmer, Sutrisno whose daughter, Alya, has dreadlocked hair. The documentary offers a close portrayal of people's beliefs that a child with dreadlocked hair comes from supernatural ancestors who follow the child. This film follows a family and their run up to a dreadlock haircutting ritual and the negotiations before the event. The director sensitively shows how Sutrisno, as the head of the family, works hard to fulfill his daughter's request to complete the ritual.



Director's Bio

Sidiq Ariyadi is a young documentary director from Indonesia, with a passion for observational documentary. He prefers to show events directly, rather than tell them and focuses on how people and culture as two subjects entwine. He also just graduated from the Jakarta Institute of Arts in Film and Television, majoring in documentary filmmaking. The documentary Gimbal was his final project before graduation. It has been selected for screening at the SEA short film Festival and was a finalist in the Lift-Off Sessions.



Editor's Bio

Widianti Puspamurti is a young film editor who has just started her journey in documentary film making. Gimbal was her first project. She has just graduated from the Jakarta Institute of Arts in Film and Television and is now working at a production house in Jakarta



Why did you make this documentary?

We made this film because the contents of the story are very close to our lives. The story is set in a location where we grew up, so we easily understand and relate to the cultural problems of dreadlock kids and their connection to the economy of the people who live within this culture. And for us, this cultural story merits being shared with others because it can remind us of the way cultural practices sit within economic life. We hope that this film is helpful in letting people know about these practices in Indonesia.

Golek Garwo

Director: Wahyu Utami

Year: 2020

Length: 30 minutes

Golek Garwo relates the story of an elderly man, Basri, his wish to get married again, and the expectations and reality he faces. This documentary offers a different take on the love that is usually expressed in romance films: always something beautiful and perfect in an ideal world. It depicts the simple and practical expression of love. It focuses on simple acts of intimacy; arguments between the bride and the groom and a sense of pride that stops them from expressing their true feelings. It also delves into the tension they experience living apart and working in two different cities.



Director's Bio

Wahyu Utami was born in Wonogiri, a village in Central Java in 1988. She graduated with a master's degree from the Institute of Art, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She is a filmmaker and lecturer at the Jogja Film Academy. Her first film Welu De Fasli was nominated at the International Competition ARKIPEL 2017. Her second film Unseen Words received an award for the best short documentary film at an Indonesian Film Festival in 2017.



Team Member's Bio

Amerta Kusuma, a self-taught filmmaker, in 2015 he made a short documentary film entitled Dear My Homeland as a director and this was screened at the Dokumenter film festival. At the same time, he started to produce a short fiction film On the Origin of Fear which screened at the Venice International Film Festival 2016, the Toronto International Film Festival 2016, and the Rotterdam International Film Festival 2016. His last work as producer was the documentary feature film You and I directed by Fanny Chotimah which premiered at the DMZ Doc Film Festival 2020 and won the Asian Perspective Award.



Why did you make this documentary?

This documentary arose out of curiosity about a Golek Garwo (matchmaking) event in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. I was curious about the motivations that the organizers and participants had toward the event. In this film, I focused on a particular story through choosing Pak Basri (62 years) as a main character. I was predominately interested in finding out about relationships and how people talk about marriage from the perspective of the elderly

Guli Armug'on: Women's Local Islamic Ritual in Uzbekistan

Director: Iqbol Meliqo'Ziev

Year: 2019

Length: 24 minutes

Location: Uzbekistan

The beautiful pink blossom of trees known as *Guli Armug'on* (Afghan redbud) in early spring are compared to women at the grave of an Islamic saint *Do'sti Xudo* (God's Friend) in the village of Ferghana region, eastern Uzbekistan. It is said that *Guli Armug'on* trees grow only at this grave in Uzbekistan, due to *baraka* (the beneficent force from God) endowed by *Do'sti Xudo's* mediation. Therefore, in this season each year, the Uzbek and Tajik women living in this region gather and celebrate the arrival of spring. This ritual is also called *Guli Armug'on*, named after this tree. In this ritual in early springtime when the nature awakens, one can observe the harmony of magical communication between nature, humans, an Islamic saint, and God. Historically speaking, Sufism, emphasizing spirits more than precepts, showed religious tolerance in Central Asia, and successfully included local pre-Islamic religious cultures into Islam. The ritual continued to exist even under the oppression of the Soviet regime and still now functions as a bridge connecting different nations and cultures across the region.



Director's Bio

Iqbol Meliqo'Ziev is a filmmaker born in Ferghana, Uzbekistan. He is currently the chair of the department of sound production, cinema and television cameraman's art at the Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture. He has produced several documentary films, including 'Weddings in Uzbekistan' (2017), 'the culture of Boysun' (2017), and so on.

Why did you make this documentary?

In Uzbekistan, Sufism (Islamic mysticism) was severely impacted through suppression under the Soviet regime of scientific atheism. However, after Gorbachev's late *Perestroika*, it experienced a widespread revival among the people. Our interest as filmmakers for this documentary was to understand the source of the vitality of Sufism. Our view is that its source of vitality is the existence of Sufi poetry recited at various rituals. This is because, since the Middle Ages, Sufi poetry, written by Sufi masters from Central Asia has been passed down orally or in written form, as wisdom to later generations even during the Soviet era, to help people be free from worldly suffering. The high morality of Sufi poetry and the beauty of its melodies continues to fascinate people's minds. To fully express the attraction of Sufi poetry with these characteristics, we thought that it would be more appropriate to express in a visual format rather than as a written paper. This forms the motivation for the creation of this work.

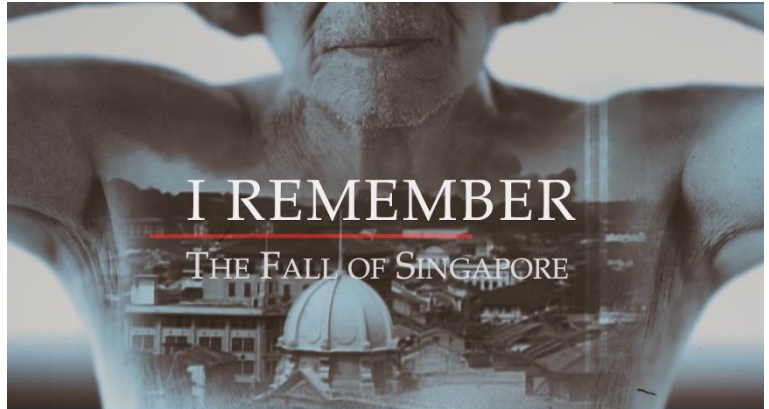
I Remember: The Fall of Singapore

Director/Writer/Producer: Michel Cayla (director and producer); Mark R. Frost (writer and producer); Panuksmi Hardjowirogo (executive producer)

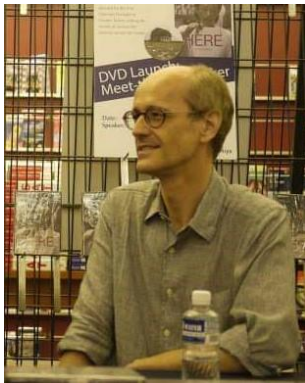
Year: 2020

Length: 47 minutes

Location: Singapore



In February 1942, Singapore fell to the invading forces of the Japanese Imperial Army. The story is well-known and has been the basis for novels, documentaries and a recent big budget television mini-series. Yet almost invariably this is a story told through Western eyes. Drawing extensively on oral history testimonies, *I Remember* focuses in on the Asian experience of this momentous event, through the memories of those who lived through it – Chinese, Indian, Malay, Eurasian and Japanese. Combining personal testimony with expert commentary and period footage, a distinct picture of the Fall of Singapore emerges, not simply as a moment of British imperial defeat and shame, but of national and regional awakening.



Director's Bio

Michel Cayla is a French-Canadian director who has been based in Singapore for the last 20 years. He is the co-founder of M'GO FILMS and has pursued a career as a producer/director of films and documentaries concurrently with prestigious international multimedia projects. His recent projects include for (Channel NewsAsia, Singapore) 'Love In A Time of Change' (2018) and 'Maverick Politicians' (2017), for which he directed the high rating episode on Chuwit Kamolvisit, Bangkok's ex-massage parlour baron, turned anti-corruption crusader. In 2001, Michel won a Silver Mikeldi at ZINEBI (2001) for his short film 'Sepuluh Menit Kematian' and his fictional short, 'Bali Nocturne', was billed with Godard's *Germany Year 90 Nine Zero* (Montreal, 1995). He holds a Master of Arts degree in Cinema from the University of Montreal.

Writer/Producer's Bio

Mark R. Frost is Associate Professor in Public History at University College London. He is the author of *Singapore: A Biography* (2009; 2012) which in 2010 won the Asia Pacific Publishers Association Gold Medal and was selected as a CHOICE 'Outstanding Academic Title.' Mark has been involved in several public history ventures, as senior scriptwriter and content director for the National Museum of Singapore's award-winning Singapore History Gallery (2006-2015) for example, or as writer and co-producer of the three-part documentary history series *Love in a Time of Change* (2018). At present, Mark leads a collaborative research project which explores the politics of heritage-making in post-civil war Sri Lanka and a research network which explores the remembrance of World War II across Asia. With Michel Cayla, he is currently finishing *Scene Unseen*, a feature-length documentary film about the emergence of Singapore's alternative music scene.



Executive Producer's Bio

Panuksmi Hardjowirogo, co-founder of M'GO FILMS, produces film, TV and immersive museum installations. She is focused on co-producing projects that are rooted in the intricate stories from Southeast Asia. Born in Jakarta, Panuksmi spent her formative years in New York City until she moved to Montreal to pursue her studies in film. She has been living and working in Singapore since 2004.

Why did you make this documentary?

Beyond Singapore, the history of the island's fall to invading Japanese forces in early-1942 has frequently focused on the combatants but far less often represented the experiences of civilians, and especially local civilians. On the other hand, since the 1980s this history *has* become part of the national narrative in Singapore through various national education efforts. Yet especially for a young audience relentlessly exposed to this narrative, the state-sponsored telling of this story can often come across as manipulative and propagandist. This film was, in part, made to re-connect Singaporean audiences with this significant period of their history by highlighting the voices and testimonies of individuals with whom many Singaporeans could today connect.

Manchurian Sleepwalkers

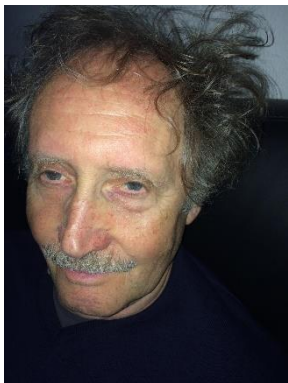
Director: Thomas Lahusen

Year: 2017

Length: 63 minutes.

Locations: Russia, China, France, Germany, Japan, Poland, Canada

With the passage of time, remembering becomes a form of sleepwalking. One-time émigrés of Manchuria and its legendary city, Harbin, take us on a journey of memory back to China. For many -- Russians, Poles, Germans and Japanese -- who left the country of the “last emperor” during the late 1940s and 50s, remembering borders on obsession. For Kumiko Muraoka, a Japanese-French poet, only forgetting alleviates the pain of having lost her childhood home.



Director's Bio

Thomas Lahusen is Producer, director, cinematographer, picture and sound editor. Her is also director and co-owner of Chemodan Films. He has taught Russian/Soviet cultural history and film at the University of Toronto and has a Ph.D. in Russian Literature and History from Lausanne University, Switzerland (1982).

Filmography (direction and co-direction):

Screening from Within, Manchurian Sleepwalkers (2018), In Search of Roubakine (2012), Meet Me in Harbin! (2011), The Interim Country (2010), The Photographer (2008), Komsomolsk mon amour (2007), The Province of Lost Film (2006).

Why did you make this documentary?

After years of historical research on the presence of Russian, Japanese, and many other foreign emires in Harbin and other places in North-East China during the first half of the 20th century, I wanted to trace what is left in the memory of these people of this experience through image and voice, more revealing by making a film.

Mlabri in the Woods

Director: Yu Kaneko

Year: 2019

Length: 85 minutes

Locations: Laos, Thailand, Japan

This documentary focuses on the Mlabri, a nomadic group who live in the mountainous northern parts of Thailand and Laos. Three Mlabri men live in a hut on the outskirts of a village in northern Thailand in Nan province. When the Japanese linguist Ito Yuma from Japan begins his linguistic research there, the men begin to talk in Northern Thai about their history of being born in the forest and settling in the village. The village of Huay Yuak is the largest



community of more than 300 Mlabri. With the linguist this documentary records people and their daily lives in the Hmong fields. It focuses on how, the Mlabri, as a non-literate society, have developed a unique style of improvisational singing and a wealth of folklore, including ghosts and specters that they encounter in the forest. The documentary follows Ito to cross the border in search of Mlabri, who are still living an old-fashioned nomadic life in the forests of Laos. It moves deep into the mountains toward a Mlabri camp. There, the documentary encounters a group for the first time. What was the scene that was witnessed there? And what are the problems that a modern nomadic people face? This documentary introduces this little-known indigenous group through this penetrating documentary.



Director's Bio

Yu Kaneko, Associate Professor of Tama Art University. Critic and filmmaker and the program director of Tokyo Documentary Film Festival. He is also on the editorial board of the documentary magazine "neoneo." He has published more than 20 books in the field of history of cinema and cultural anthropology. His first submitted documentary was a 16mm film he made during university to the Mediawave Festival in Hungary in 1997. His experimental film "in the darkness of the space" won the grand prize at the Nara Avant-garde Film Festival and was specially screened at the Image Forum Festival in 2008. Since then, three of his documentary films "Belgrade1999," "Muneo-ism" and "Imperial" have been screened in theatres across Japan including Tokyo, Osaka and Yokohama. His recent works, "A Man Who Became Cinema" (2018) and "Mlabri in the Woods" were both screened at the Tokyo

Documentary Film Festival. He has written many books including "Folklore in Borderlands" "Literature in Foreign Lands" "The Boundary of Images," "Documentary Film Methods," "Mixed Race Archipelago," "the Criticism of the Pleasure," and "World Cinema Guide" among others. He won the Suntory Academic Awards with his book "The Boundary of Images." He has also written and edited various other books such as "Film makers," "Chris Marker," "Immigrants and Minorities in European Cinema," "American Avant-garde Movies," "Apichatpong Weerasethakul" and "Jean Rouch." He is also a translator and brought "Walter Benjamin's Grave" by Michael Taussig, "Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture" by Tim Ingold, "Violence of Splendor" by Alphonso Linguis to Japanese academic audiences.

Why did you make this documentary?

The Mlabri people, who live in the Zomian mountainous regions of Thailand, Laos, and possibly Myanmar, are nomads who have long lived as hunter-gatherers. The film begins by depicting the fact that the Hmong, who are slash-and-burn farmers have burned down the jungle and the Mlabri are helping them as day laborers. There is a contemporary anthropological and eco-critical perspective here. The Mlabri have lived in a non-literate society, but they also possess an improvisational singing style and folklore.

This project began when I met Yuma Ito, a Japanese linguist who speaks fluent Mlabri and is conducting a comparative study of the Mlabri languages scattered throughout the Indochina Peninsula. In the second half of the

film, we ventured deep into the forests of Laos to document the life of the modern-day migrant people of Mlabri, who have never been filmed before. What we can see from this is the fundamental issue of what it means for humanity to use fire, to eat, to live, to become a husband and wife, to have children, and to make a family. These are all fundamental conditions of our civilization and forces us to think introspectively.

Over the Arirang Pass: Zainichi Korean Music

Director: Ko Jeongja and Terada Yoshitaka

Year: 2018

Length: 76 minutes

Location: Japan

This film explores the intricate connection between musical activities and social marginality in the case of Koreans who migrated or were forcefully relocated to Japan during its colonization of the Korean Peninsula (1910-45), and their descendants. Known as Zainichi Koreans, they constitute one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Japan. Caught by the bifurcation of the Korean Peninsula after WWII and the continuing three-way strife among South Korea, North Korea and Japan, the Zainichi Korean community in Japan has suffered multi-layered divisions, which have greatly impacted the life and identity of individual members in terms of nationality, citizenship, language and personal name.



The Arirang Pass referred to in the title is a frequently evoked symbol of the hardships Zainichi Koreans have had to endure in their marginalization and the act of “crossing over.” Performing songs about the Arirang Pass and others based on their experiences and memory provides venues for Zainichi Koreans to share their past and present struggles (among themselves and with others), connect generations, and instill hope for the future.

Directors' Bios



Ko Jeongja obtained her PhD in 2005 from the Graduate University for Advanced Studies with her dissertation on mask dance in Korea, and currently teaches at Kobe University. A second-generation Zainichi Korean from Osaka herself, she has been studying about musicians from her own community.

Terada Yoshitaka, Professor Emeritus at the National Museum of Ethnology, holds a PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Washington. His research areas include India, Philippines, Japan and Asian America, with a particularly interest in the roles of performing arts for marginalized individuals and communities in maintaining their identity and negotiating with the majority/mainstream culture. Terada has also experimented on filmmaking methods and produced more than 30 films on musical traditions from diverse locations, including three on Japan's minority communities.



Why did you make this documentary?

We organized a concert of Zainichi Korean music at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan in 2014 as part of the international symposium on music and minorities. The two objectives of the concert were; 1) to introduce their little-known musical activities to the general audience, and 2) to help break the political barriers within the Zainichi Korean community. The concert was unique because the performers affiliated with opposing political organizations performed together for the very first time. Because the responses from the performers and audience alike were so emotionally charged and extraordinary that we decided to make a film to share the

experience of the concert with a larger public and to explore further the potentials of performing arts in connecting people who may not have channels of meaningful communication otherwise. We also wished to portray how performing arts can help maintain the history of marginalized communities, which is often belittled in the mainstream society.

RAPTHAI

Directors: Jirakan Sakunee, Witchayoot Ponpraserd and Sarun Kositsukjaroen

Year: 2018

Length: 25 minutes

RAPTHAI introduces how “rap” culture has taken root in and influenced contemporary Thai society. Focusing on the synergy between Thai culture and “rap” music tradition, this documentary homes in on the stories of 12 Thai rappers and presents a unique look at the different styles they express through their life experiences.



Directors' Bios



Jirakan Sakunee, born in 1998, Jirakan is in his 3rd year at the Suan Sunan International School of Art, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Jirakan produces documentary films at the Ratchadamnoen Contemporary Art Center Thailand. He received a special award at the Thai Doc Film. He also participated in ...and Action! Asia#04: Exchange Program for Students in Film Studies organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center in 2017.

Witchayoot Ponpraserd, born in 1998 Witchayoot is currently studying in his 3rd year at the Suan Sunan International School of Art, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. He won the short film contest 6+6, Department of Skill Development No.4. He received a special award at the Thai Doc Film. He also participated in ...and Action! Asia#04: Exchange Program for Students in Film Studies organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center in 2017.



Sarun Kositsukjaroen, born in 1997, Sarun is currently studying in his 3rd year at the Suan Sunan International School of Art, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. As well as student life he works parttime behind the scenes on movies, commercials, dramas and music videos. He won the short film contest 6+6, Department of Skill Development No.4. He received a special award at the Thai Doc Film. He also participated in ...and Action! Asia#04: Exchange Program for Students in Film Studies organized by the Japan Foundation Asia Center in 2017.

Why did you make this documentary?

“RAPTHAI” isn’t grammatically correct in English, but in Thailand this is the word everyone uses to refer to Thai rapping. The issue is that we know what are the elements of rapping, but, we don’t know about what are the elements of Thai rap. Rap is a culture which is strong, but what about rap in Thai culture? When we mix these two together is Thai rap original rap? Or is Thai rap part of Thai culture? We have no idea how to answer this. But one thing we learnt from making this documentary is that culture is something that is exchangeable (between others) and base from which we can learning good and bad things from the past and develop a new culture.

Red Wine Chicken

Director: Grace Chung Lay Woei

Year: 2020

Length: 16 minutes

Red Wine Chicken focuses on a Vietnamese bride, Ah Jiao, married to a Malaysian man living in Bukit Pelanduk, in the state of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. The documentary focuses on their relationship with Ah Jiao reflecting on her place in her family. Weaving the story around Fuzhou red wine chicken, a traditional delicacy, family and food, this work dwells on the different ways people relate to each other.



Director's Bio

Grace Chung Lay Woei is a Malaysian female filmmaker who studied for a Foundation in Arts (2018) and has a Bachelor of Communication (HONS) Broadcasting (2020) from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. She was an assistant editor and camera assistant for Just Another Production (JAP), which focuses on weddings. She was also the Director of Photography in the documentary What Yasmin Left Behind (2019), commemorating the Malaysian female director who passed away 10 years ago. The documentary was screened on "Yasmin Ten Years On" at GMBB. She is the director of Red Wine Chicken.



Producer's Bio

Angel Yuen Yi Qian is a Malaysian female filmmaker who studied for a Foundation in Arts (2018) and Bachelor of Communication (HONS) Broadcasting (2020) at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman. She is the producer Red Wine Chicken. She is also an assistant editor in Rev Asia Sdn Bhd. The inspiration for this documentary is Angel's aunt, Ah Jiao, the Vietnamese bride in the documentary.



Why did you make this documentary?

This documentary was inspired by our producer's aunt, Ah Jiao, the main protagonist in this documentary. We made this because there is some discrimination and stereotypes towards women who come to Malaysia as brides and that a younger generation of Malaysians are also starting to lose interest in inheriting the recipes of the traditional cuisines of their cultures. We had the purpose of wanting the audience to understand that true love can be found in many ways even if they are uncommon and get the audience to think that we shouldn't forget our cultures and traditions

RITO RITO

Director: Nguyen Ngoc Thao Ly

Year: 2015

Length: 15 minutes

A 15-year-old girl Rito is bullied at school, becomes depressed, and leaves at grade 7. This documentary pulls out Rito's story and how she came to cosplay as a way of escaping from reality, becoming another person, and transforming into a virtual character. RITO RITO focuses on how, through cosplay, friendships are made, and society is mediated. A sensitive depiction of social transformation and the influence of cosplay tradition in urban Vietnamese society.



Director's Bio

Nguyen Ngoc Thao Ly, born in 1996 in Hanoi, Vietnam. A recent graduate of the Academy of Journalism and Communication, majoring in Multi-media Journalism, she started film-making in 2015, and took a film making course at the Center for Assistance and Development of Movie Talents (TPD). She has taken part in several courses and workshops about film making. Her first documentary RITO RITO won two Golden Lotus Bud Awards and one Silver Kite Award.



Main Cast's Bio

Ta Thanh Thao, born in 2000, living in Hanoi, Vietnam



Why did you make this documentary?

I used to be a cosplayer. That is the reason why when I started making my first documentary, I decided to make a film about cosplay community in Vietnam. My very original thought was to change people's preconception about cosplay, because in my country, almost all still believe that cosplay is time and money consuming, and that cosplayers are bizarre and unrealistic. However, during the journey of finding my main character for the film, I coincidentally met Rito, then everything had changed ever since. Rito and her life story had an unexplainable attraction to me. Rito was dealing with malicious bullying from her classmates. After she left her school, she started to find a job illegally, as she was under the working age. No friends. No dreams. The only thing that motivated her to survive was her social network. Years passed by, Rito found out that the world will accept her only when she was not herself. So she started being others. To look like others, act like others and then be like others. I maintained the film with suspense if cosplay could truly rescue her, or it would become her next problem.

Screaming Goats

Director: Thunskas Pansittivorakul

Year: 2018

Length: 22 minutes

The southern border of Thailand is dangerous, scary, you shouldn't live there, it's full of violence." That how it's mostly presented in the media. But what is the Southern border really like? This documentary will guide you to another perspective through the eyes of a female-female couple.



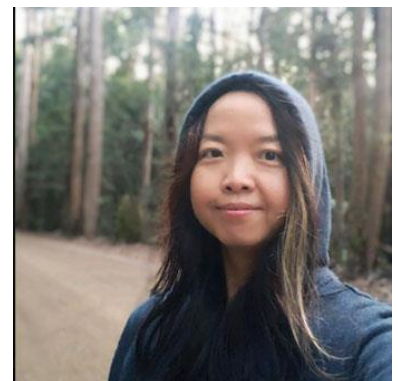
Director's Bio

Thunskas Pansittivorakul was born in Bangkok in 1973. He graduated in Art Education from Chulalongkorn University. He won the Grand Prize award at the 4th Taiwan International Documentary Festival in 2004 for his documentary feature Happy Berry. His 'Heartbreak Pavilion' project won the Top Award from Pusan Promotion Plan (PPP) at the 10th Pusan International Film Festival in 2005. In 2007 he received the Silpatorn Award from The Ministry of Culture's Office of Contemporary Arts, which is awarded to one outstanding artist each year. The past honorees in the field of film include Pen-Ek Ratanaruang, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Wisit Sasanatieng, etc. His work has premiered at international film festivals including Berlinale, Rotterdam and many other film festivals.



Main Cast's Bio

Anticha Sangchai is one of the subjects in the film. She lives in Pattani, a southern border of Thailand, and she organized a LGBT group in the Muslim area. She served as a philosophy lecturer at Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus. She is a painting therapist and an LGBT human rights defender. In 2013, she founded and directed BUKU; The organization which ran a feminist bookstore, the gender-inclusive football club and the women wellbeing space in Pattani province. BUKU works within an anti-oppression, intersectionality feminism, and human rights framework to protect SOGIESC rights and promote LGBT/women's wellbeing, gender equality in the three southern border provinces of Thailand.



Why did you make this documentary?

I personally knew Benedict Anderson, a professor who specialized in Southeast Asian history, from 2005. Among many suggestions that he gave me was "why don't you make a film on the Southern border conflict?" since I originally came from that region and my hometown was just 30 minutes away from the border. I have touched upon the issue before, although quite superficially, in my previous works like *This Area is Under Quarantine* (2008) and *The Terrorists* (2011) which tells of incidents that took place not far from the problematic area. However, I had never really dared to enter the area myself. Later, Anderson passed away in 2015, not long after another coup d'état by the military in Thailand. This made me contemplate subject matters that I had never addressed in my work before, namely the Southern border and ultra-nationalists. All these issues now appear in this documentary as my tribute to Benedict Anderson (1936-2015).

TAZARA Stories

Directors: Jamie Monson and Ru Sheng

Year: 2021

Length: 58 minutes

Locations: China, Tanzania, Zambia

TAZARA Stories tells the story of a train through the memories of the workers from Tanzania, Zambia and China who built it. Remembering and reliving their youth, they take us on a journey through time from the exhilaration of construction through disappointments and derailments to their own hopeful resilience in the face of enduring change. The film interweaves historical footage from the 1960s and 1970s with oral narratives and contemporary updates about the railway's progress.



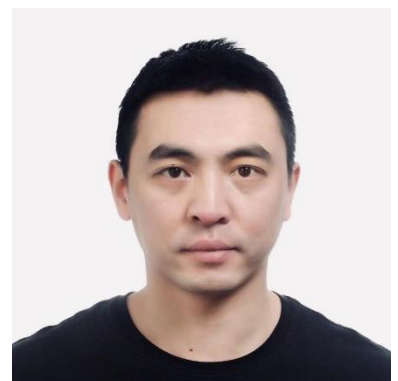
As young men they found themselves in new lands with no shared language yet found ways to communicate as they shaped bridges, blasted tunnels and laid down the steel rails. As they grow old, they continue to recall the shared experience that brought personal and collective transformation. The film interweaves historical footage from the 1960s and 1970s with oral narratives and contemporary updates about the railway's progress.

Directors' Bios



Jamie Monson is Director of the African Studies Center and Professor of History at Michigan State University. A recognized researcher and scholar, Monson's efforts have established her as a pioneer in China-Africa development studies. This is her first film, the outcome of almost twenty years of research on the history of the TAZARA railway. She has also published a book, *Africa's Freedom Railway: How a Chinese Development Project Changed Lives and Livelihoods in Tanzania*. Monson's newest project is a forthcoming book titled *Looking East: Africa's Historical Engagement with China*.

Ru Sheng was born in Harbin, China and graduated from Beijing Broadcasting Institute. He is a documentary film director and a television screenwriter.



Why did you make this documentary?

I have researched and written about the work experiences of Chinese and African railway workers who built the TAZARA railway in Tanzania in Zambia in the late 1960s and 1970s. I created this film as a way to allow the retired railway workers to share their own stories, including the way this Cold War project of development assistance changed their lives.

Tethering Foals and Praising Masters of the Altai Mountains

Directors: Robert O. Beahrs and Victoria Soyan Peemot

Year: 2020

Length: 22 min

Languages: Tyvan, Kazakh, Mongolian with English subtitles

Location: Bayan-Ölgii, Mongolia



Cher Törel: In *Kinship with the Land* is a series of essay films about how people relate to their animals and homelands in Inner Asia. The project is a collaboration between an ethnomusicologist from Minnesota who researches song-based storytelling in Inner Asia and an anthropologist from the Tyva Republic who specializes in human-horse relations.

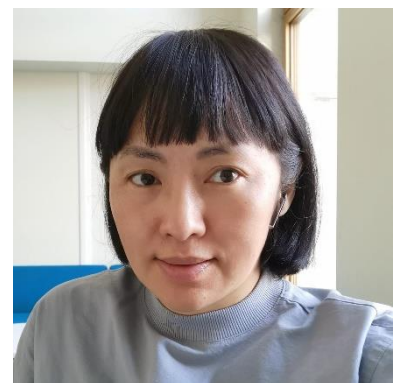
During our fieldwork in Bayan-Ölgii, Mongolia in July 2016, we stayed with a family of herders who belong to the Adai-Irgit clan of Altai Tyvans. The Tyva people, whose territory has been divided among Russia, Mongolia, and China, speak a Turkic language and maintain transhumant practices of herding horses, yaks, cows, sheep, goats, and camels. In the early morning, our hosts began making *araga*, an alcoholic drink distilled from fermented cow's milk, for a celebration called Kulun Baglaary, or Tethering the Foals. This film follows Dondog and his family over one day as they tether their foals, milk their mares, and offer praises to the Masters of the Altai Mountains, the superordinate nonhuman beings who guard this place.

Directors' Bios



Robert O. Beahrs is an ethnomusicologist, sound artist, and filmmaker from Minnesota currently living in Istanbul. His research examines human-nonhuman geographies, song-based storytelling, and the politics of heritage in Siberia and Inner Asia. He studied music at Pomona College and received his M.A. and Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Berkeley. Beahrs is currently working as a lecturer in ethnomusicology at the Center for Advanced Studies in Music (MIAM), Istanbul Technical University. His recent work appears in the *Oxford Handbook of Voice Studies* and the journal *Asian Music*. Since 2015, he has been collaborating with Victoria Soyan Peemot on a multimodal project about land-based kinship in the Altai and Sayan Mountains funded by the Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC) and the Wenner-Gren Foundation. For more details, please visit: <http://www.robeahrs.com>

Victoria Soyan Peemot is a journalist, ethnographer, and Ph.D. student in cultural studies at the University of Helsinki. Raised by her grandparents in the Tyva Republic, she spent her youth riding horses and herding livestock on the Inner Asian steppe. She takes a critical approach to these experiences in her doctoral research, which examines the triadic relationship of human-horse-homeland and post socialist identity negotiations in the Altai and Sayan Mountain Region, Inner Asia. Victoria also studies cross-cultural encounters between Europeans and Indigenous peoples in pre-revolutionary Siberia. Victoria's research is supported by the University of Helsinki, the Kone Foundation, and the Nordenskiöld Foundation.



Why did you make this documentary?

Cher Törel: In *Kinship with the Land* is a series of essay films about how people relate to their animals and homelands in Inner Asia; two films were completed and screened in 2020 and 2021. Our main field research method was participant-observation with human-nonhuman communities using photography and audiovisual documentation of pastoralists' practices. Making, sharing, and discussing audiovisual stories from fieldwork formed an important part of our collaborative methodology with pastoralists and helped to shape the theoretical framework in our scholarship around the concept of gift-knowledge.

That Night

Director: Jeremy Luke Bolatag

Year: 2018

Length: 20 minutes

“That Night” follows the lives of two survivors of the Roxas night market bombing in Davao City, the Philippines on September 2, 2016. It centers on a vendor at the market who was severely injured, and a truck driver whose wife and son died while getting a massage. The film documents the two survivors a year after the tragedy.



Director's Bio

Jeremy Luke Bolatag is an emerging Filipino filmmaker who earned a Bachelor of Arts in Film degree at the University of the Philippines Film Institute, and finished with Latin honors. His thesis short film, *Katong Gabii* (That Night), has been screened in local and international film festivals. At present, he is a freelance filmmaker who also works for an award-winning post-production company, Media East Productions, that caters to local and international clients.

Line Producer's Bio

Arun Singh is a long-time independent film enthusiast and first-time producer. An aspiring writer himself, he is a proud alumnus of De La Salle University's Malate Literary Folio organization, where he was published twice for flash fiction. At present, he works as a Learning & Development and Culture leader for a leading multinational IT company. In his free time, he enjoys playing video games and board games, playing the guitar, and writing short stories.



Why did you make this documentary?

Being from Davao City myself, I feel very passionate about the subject matter in *Katong Gabii* (That Night). The film tackles the War on Terror in Mindanao, Philippines under Martial Law and sheds light on the current political climate in the country during President Rodrigo Duterte's regime. This documentary also captures the Filipino spirit and resilience during a tragedy, and provides gender, religion, and social class analysis through its characters.

The Cambodian Theater

Director: Sopheak Moeurn

Year: 2016

Length: 7 minutes

Currently in Cambodia, Khmer Theater is in decline as fewer people watch it and don't know about its existence. The Cambodian Theater introduces the passion of a few artists involved in keeping alive and protecting the tradition of theater. It offers a sensitive portrayal of people who hold down regular jobs during the day, but get together and prepare stage plays during seasonal tours.



Director's Bio

Sopheake Moeurn, a Cambodian filmmaker and a video producer based in Phnom Penh. She studied filmmaking at Pour un Sourire d'Enfant's School of Media in Phnom Penh, and produced some of her short films both locally and abroad. Besides working as a filmmaker, she also works as a film fixer or line producer in international projects shoot in Cambodia.

Why did you make this documentary?

The Khmer Theater is dying in Cambodia because no one goes to watch it anymore or even knows about its existence. In the past, it used to be very popular because there was no TV or internet and so people liked to attend the shows to be entertained and to socialize. Nowadays, in order to keep this tradition alive, a few artists who share the same passion try their very best to protect Cambodian theater. They have regular jobs during the daytime, but as soon as they are free, they get together and prepare the stage plays that will be presented to the audience during their seasonal tour.

The Father I knew

Director: Aye Chan

Year: 2020

Length: 14 minutes

Thirty years ago, when she was a young child, Jenni's father left his family to join the Burmese students fighting the military dictatorship. He was never to return. Now a grown woman with a family of her own, refugee worker Jenni retraces her revolutionary father's final steps and considers the impact the country's decades-long conflicts have had on her family and indeed a whole generation. This documentary is a sensitive portrayal of a daughter's search for a lost father amidst the impact of the conflicts in the late 1980s.



Director's Bio



Aye Chan is from Bilin, Mon State, Myanmar. She is from a family of five and her parents are merchants. She studied at Mawlamyine University for five years as an undergraduate and graduated with a degree in geology. Since childhood she was interested in photography and films. In 2017, she moved to Yangon to learn photography at the Myanmar Photographic Society and studied video editing at the Myanmar Media Development Centre. In 2018, she won a scholarship for the Yangon Film School (YFS) to study filmmaking specializing documentary.

Why did you make this documentary?

I met the main protagonist, Jenni, in 2017 when I was in Loikaw, Kayah State, Myanmar. At that time, I knew about her father who had lost his life in the 1988 student revolution. When I heard about this, I became very interested. In 2019, the Yangon Film School (YFS) held a competition under the theme of "Youth and Peace." When I was thinking of doing this documentary, I remembered her as she had helped Kayah refugees along the Thai-Myanmar border. When my team learnt her activities, it turned out that she is also a very strong woman, and her parent's relationship further intrigued me. For that reason alone, I found it difficult to focus on the theme itself. Nevertheless, I managed to find a way to shoot this beautiful story and film.

The Fighter

Director: M. Iskandar Tri Gunawan

Year: 2018

Length: 27 minutes

The Fighter introduces Pencak Dor martial arts fighting and the story of Pati, who aims to compete in the ring. Yudi, an experienced fighter, trains Pati and other Silat students. The 'free ring' format of Pencak Dor contests have become a magnet for fighters wanting to test their strength and demonstrate skills in combat. With no winners nor losers, no insurance and only special prayers for safety, The Fighter focuses on the role and development of Silat in the fighters' everyday lives.



Director's Bio

M. Iskandar Tri Gunawan is a documentary filmmaker. He built his filmmaking career from independent film community during his bachelor study in Yogyakarta. Until now, he has been a facilitator of documentary video making for villagers, youth communities, and students. His documentaries as a director as well as a cinematographer are, Tulang Punggung (2003), Perampok Ulung (2009), The First Impression (2015), Bulan Sabit di Kampung Naga (The Crescent in Dragon Village) (2015), and The Light of Hope (2017), which have screened and won awards at numerous film festivals in Asia.

Producer's Bio

Ali Minanto is a lecturer at the Department of Communications, Islamic University of Indonesia. As a lecturer, he has carried out research and community service, as well as published books and papers for academic journals and conferences, both at a national and international level. His academic interests focus on visual issues in culture, cultural and media studies, multiculturalism, and politics. He is a producer and researcher for several documentary movies such as Balada Kampung Naga (the Ode of Dragon Village), Bulan Sabit di Kampung Naga (The Crescent in Dragon Village), and Mata Air Mata: the Tale of Water. He is also a facilitator for photography workshops for rural youth communities.



Why did you make this documentary?

Pencak Dor is a martial arts battle event that still survives today. Pencak Dor is not just a spectacle, but it attempts to preserve pencak silat as a typical Indonesian martial art in order to maintain its existence. Pencak Dor is also arena that brings together fighters from various traditions, such as wrestling, boxing, Muay Thai, wushu, etc. I became interested in making this documentary because Pencak Dor becomes a space to channel people and to be a substitute for street fighting: it can reduce the potential of emergent youth gangs in East Java, Indonesia. Pencak Dor cannot be separated from Islamic values that developed in pesantren (an Islamic boarding school). One of the subjects in this film is a santri (Islamic Student) who tries to face his first fight in Pencak Dor.

Through Songs, We Share Stories

Director: Dony Putro Herwanto

Year: 2018

Length: 24 minutes

There are many ways to convey the truth of an event to the next generation, and one of those is through singing what is written. This was the path chosen by the Dialita Choir in uttering the truth of the events they experienced in 1965. Although the lyrics revolve around the beauty of nature, parents, friends and love for the motherland, the Dialita Choir tries to give another perspective in reading the dark history of the event. Besides trying to tell the truth, singing is one way to cure the wounds of stigma and discrimination they have experienced for 53 years.



Director's Bio

Dony Putro Herwanto, born in Ngawi, East Java in 1983. He currently works as a journalist at DAAI TV Indonesia for documentary programs. Some of his works were selected for documentary film festivals in Indonesia and became finalists in several film festivals in foreign countries, such as at the Aljazeera International Documentary Film Festival 2015, Kuala Lumpur Eco Film Festival 2019, and finalist at the Sound & Images Challenge Film Festival in Macau 2019. At present he lives in Bogor with his wife and child.

Cinematographer and Editor's Bio

Abul Ala Maududi Ilhamda was born and lives in Jakarta, Indonesia. He is a broadcast graduate. He initially loved photography and now works as a documentary videographer at a television station. To date, he has worked as a videographer. Some of his films were selected at domestic film festivals.



Why did you make this documentary?

Our reason is that we wanted to provide a vocal space for the survivors of the 1965 genocide that occurred in Indonesia. This is not to open historical wounds, but to display the dark history experienced by survivors through songs written in prison.

Tokyo 2018 Phnom Penh

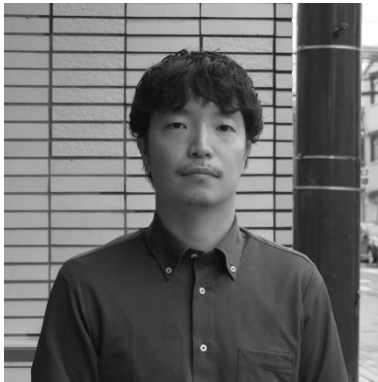
Director: Tatsuhito Utagawa

Year: 2019

Length: 30 minutes

Locations: Japan and Cambodia

This film is about who we are. It is inspired by Jean Rouch, who is an exponent of cinema verité, and Syuji Terayama, who is a remarkable Japanese artist whose work cuts across filmmaking and the performing arts. It focuses on both Tokyo, which was due to host the Olympic Games in 2020, and Phnom Penh where the ruling party won all seats in the National Assembly. It captures these two cities' images in the summer in 2018 through their landscapes and portraits. "What do happiness and love mean to you?" "Who are you?" - People are asked these questions, which ultimately concern the filmmaker's existential anxiety of living in Tokyo. To confront it, he embarks on a journey to deconstruct Tokyo's images in the context of the other city, Phnom Penh.



Director's Bio

Born in 1990, **Tatsuhito Utagawa** is a film director and artist. He has made films for NHK, Japan's public broadcaster, TV commercials, and films. His debut documentary film is *Cambodian Textiles* (2018) screened in Cambodia, Spain, and Brazil. It won a special jury award at the Beyond the Borders International Documentary Festival in 2018. *Tokyo 2018 Phnom Penh* (2019, short doc) was shown at the Festival Tokyo 2018. *The Sculpture of Place & Time* (2020, short doc) was screened at IFFR 2020, Japan Cuts 2020 and at TDFF 2020. It won the Best Choreopoem Award at the Film and Video Poetry Symposium 2020.

Why did you make this documentary?

The film asks simple questions to people who live in both cities, Tokyo and Phnom Penh. This way to film is unique because those answers depend on times, nationality, culture, and ages. However, the film tackles an alternative way by mixing the footage filmed in both countries.

I aimed to depict an alternative perspective in the film by asking the same questions to people who come from quite different cultures and have different values. I was wondering what "love" and "happiness" were for them at that moment in time? While asking a variety of people, I felt that the process of making the film was like a journey facing questions without answers. As I had filmed in Phnom Penh, it was politically unstable due to the 2018 Cambodian general election. Therefore, the Cambodian government had restricted journalism and freedom of speech.

Under those circumstances, I hoped to touch upon the diversity of people living in Phnom Penh as they are usually not represented in touristic information. That is the reason why I made this documentary film.

Unsilent Potato

Director: Sein Lyan Tun

Year: 2016

Length: 22 minutes

This story is about a young disabled Karen ethnic woman named 'Potato'. In 2014, she was raped by her neighbor, a married man who was later accused over said case. The rape case nonetheless was presented as a seduction suit: one of having unlawful sexual relations through persuasion. This documentary focuses on a strong-willed Karen ethnic woman and her family who are eager to share this with the female community and who have long suffered in silence to rise up and fight for truth and fair justice where no-one is above the law.



Director's Bio

Sein Lyan Tun is an emerging filmmaker from Myanmar, and his documentary work *Unsilent Potato* has been well recognized in Myanmar and Southeast Asia. In 2015, his first short documentary film *Charred Brick* premiered at One World Human Rights Film Festival in Prague. He won the People Choice Award from One World in Kyrgyzstan and India. He also directed and co-produced a TV documentary titled *Border Boy* for Inside Lens, NHK World's new documentary strand, specialized in Japan and Asia in 2016 and also directed *Dream over Monsoon* for Color of Asia, Southeast Asia Program NHK in 2017. He became an alumni of Talents Tokyo in 2016, Southeast Asia Film Lab in 2016 and *Ties That Bind* in 2017. Currently, he is working on his documentary *For me and others like me* which won the Docs Spirit Award from Docs Port Incheon in 2016 and the Broadcasting Culture Foundation Prize in 2017 in Japan and he is developing his first feature fiction film *The Beer Girl* in Yangon.

Producer's Bio

Phyo Nge works as cinematographer and producer. He also produces documentaries *Charred Brick*, *Unsilent Potato* which won international award from China and Central Asia.



Why did you make this documentary?

After making the documentary *Unsilent Potato*, the story was a success in Myanmar and her case won in 2017 after three years in court. The documentary brought attention to Potato and her family. After screening around the country, Potato allowed women to speak out about their experiences. As a director myself, I want to share this with the women's community as they have suffered long enough in silence to awaken, stand out and fight for truth and fair justice and to obtain a clean society where no-one is above the law. People in Myanmar and also all around Asia need to know that they have to seek justice instead of accepting payments from the defendant. A similar situation happens wherever you are and whoever you are. All rape cases are rarely discussed openly in Myanmar as they are outside of people's comfort zones due to a cultural fear-shame dynamic. Mostly, cases are sealed with a small payment from defendants to silence victims. I hope that this documentary can be related to this year's theme of "Justice."

What Means to be Hafu

Director: Nicolas Guarin

Year: 2015

Length: 3 minutes 52 seconds

Location: Japan

In Japan, the ideas of nationality and ethnic belonging are still tightly interwoven. This film reflects on the word “Hafu” from the perspective of two young Japanese nationals of mixed ethnic heritage and one Brazilian with Japanese ethnicity.



Director's Bio

Nicolas Guarin, Colombian Filmmaker. Graduate of the Film and TV Production course at The National University of Colombia, MA in Video & Media Arts from Kyoto Seika University, and recipient of a Phd in Film and New Media from Tokyo University of the Arts. Worked in the TV industry in Colombia as a screenwriter and director. Since 2012, moved to Japan where he currently works as an Assistant Producer for Sony Interactive Entertainment and as an Adjunct Professor at Kyoto Seika University.

Why did you make this documentary?

I was born and raised in Colombia, a south American country where people from many ethnicities and cultures have mixed together by centuries. For us, being Colombian is something totally unrelated with ethnicity. However, when I came to Japan in 2012, I understood for the first time that here, and in many other countries around the world, the concepts of ‘citizenship’ and ‘ethnicity’ are strongly related.

For this reason, Japanese-people with mixed heritage, who are referred commonly as “Hafu” (from the English word “half”), and also people with Japanese ethnicity born and raised in other countries, have sometimes trouble understanding their national identity. In this film, I show a series of video portraits of people with mixed backgrounds who confront this kind dilemmas and want the audience to wander about the meaning of the word “hafu.”

With Me.

Directors: Uegai Hatsumi and Toyoda Arisa

Year: 2020

Length: 7 minutes

Location: Japan

Against the backdrop of a nostalgic cityscape, people walk by. One of them, a little girl being led by her mother, suddenly looks toward me. She jumps, laughs, and skips as she passes by.... This girl full of life has grown; from kindergarten to elementary school student and then to become a junior high school student. She was alone but made friends to graduate. The girl who walks with her friends leaves this town today.



Directors' Bios

Directed by Uegai Hatsumi and Toyoda Arisa, two students who recently graduated from Kyoto Seika University. This short documentary received a recommendation from the President of the University.



Why did you make this documentary?

This animation was created while walking and observing shopping streets and towns.

Since childhood, we felt that towns were torn down and replaced with new ones.

But on the other hand, there are many things that continue to remain for a long time that are forgotten those passing by. It expresses these things that gradually fade away and become dilapidated, and those that are new and full of vitality. This animation was created in the hope of expressing these things.

Selection of Animated Short Films of the
Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation,
Tokyo University of Arts

A Place to Name

Director: Ataru Sakagami

Year: 2015

Length: 4 minutes 31 seconds

This place is where my grandparents, my parents, and I once lived. Even though I lose my memories and feelings of it, it does exist there and keeps being in existence.

Director's Bio

Ataru Sakagami, born in Niigata, 1986. Graduated from Kyoto University of Art and Design. Graduated at Tokyo University of the Arts, Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation in 2015.



Bath House of Whales

Director: Mizuki Kiyama

Year: 2019

Length: 6 minutes 40 seconds

In this small town somewhere in Japan, the mothers in the neighborhood end their day at the public bath. When a little girl goes along with her mother, she is awed by the sight of a group of bathing women who behave very differently from the others. Within that group is her mother and she blends in perfectly.

Director's Bio

Mizuki Kiyama, born in Osaka, Japan in 1992. Graduated from Kanazawa College of Art, Department of Fine Art, Oil Painting course in 2015.



BONNIE

Director: Okamoto Masanori

Year: 2011

Length: 2 minutes 27 seconds

"BONNIE" is something like the wind, and she was hoping that everything would get blown away.

Director's Bio

Okamoto Masanori, born in Tokyo, 1985. In 2008 graduated Musashino Art University. In 2012, graduated at Tokyo University of the Arts, Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation.



Calling You

Director: Ohtakara Hitomi

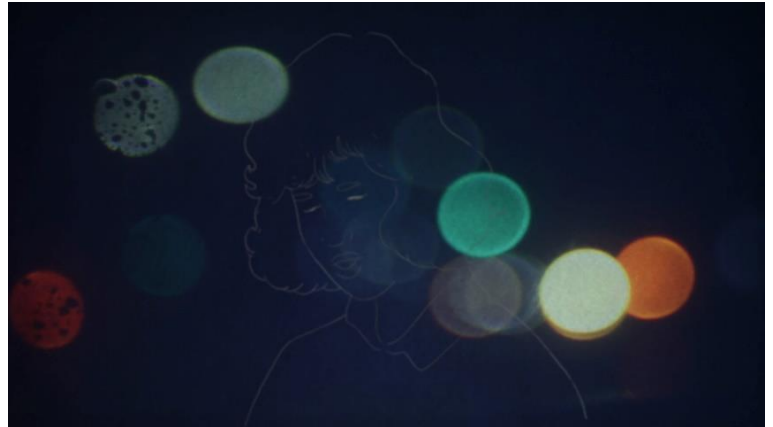
Year: 2016

Length: 9 minutes 23 seconds

This is the first letter addressed to you. A voyage to trace the vague images of memories.

Director's Bio

Ohtakara Hitomi, born in 1988, Graduated from Musashino Art University, College of Art and Design, Department of Design Informatics in 2012. Graduated at Tokyo University of Arts, Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation in 2016. Website : <https://www.kekefilms.com>



Candy.zip

Director: Tomoki Misato

Year: 2017

Length: 4 minutes 30 seconds

Aoko is confident about the documents she creates at work, but doesn't get any positive feedback. Then, she witnesses her colleague secretly changing the documents she created. Aoko is turned into a piece of candy to keep her quiet...



Director's Bio

Tomoki Misato, born in Tokyo, Japan in 1992. Graduated from Musashino Art University, Faculty of Arts and Design, Department of Visual Communication Design in 2016. As of 2017, studying at the Department of Animation at Tokyo University of the Arts Graduate School of Film and New Media.

The Fire Celebration at the Kurama

Director: Yosuke Tani

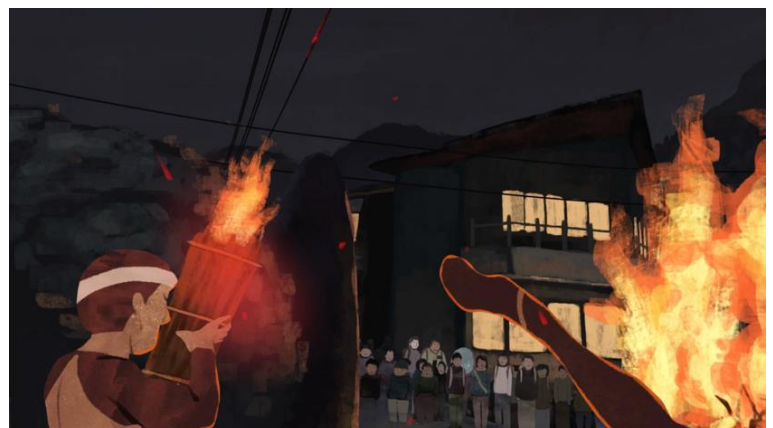
Year: 2017

Length: 4 minutes 26 seconds

Yuki-jinja Shrine is located in Kurama, Kyoto. Every year, a unique fire festival is held at the shrine. This film mixes documentary and fantasy to depict the people, deities, and spirits who create the festival together.

Director's Bio

Yosuke Tani, born in Kyoto 1992. Graduated Ritsumeikan University 2015. During the student, Learned drawings at Atelier Rojue. Presently studying at Tokyo University of the Arts, Graduate School of Film and New Media, Department of Animation in 2017.



Typhoon No.14

Director: Akino Fukuji

Year: 2018

Length: 6 minutes 56 seconds

Okinawa is ominous right before the arrival of a typhoon. At first, Anri is excited by the unusual turn of events, but gradually she becomes fearful of the threatening typhoon. Then, her big sister tells her that typhoons have an eye...

Director's Bio

Akino Fukuji, born in Okinawa. Japan in 1993. Graduated from Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, Department of Design and Crafts, Design Major in 2016.

