

## **PRESS KIT**

### Project Fact Sheet

**Project Title:** Two Islands

**Total Running time:** 15 minutes 14 Seconds

**Completion Date:** 28 March 2019

### **Logline:**

Having lived abroad for most of her life, a Singaporean-Chinese photographer returns to her grandfather's ancestral village in China to embrace what it means to be Chinese.

### **Synopsis:**

Two Islands is a short documentary that follows Kylie Woon, an ethnically Singaporean-Chinese 28-year-old, who has strong feelings of displacement after years of growing up overseas in Western states. She embarks on a photography project to Hainan to explore her ancestral home & extended family from the island, thereby discovering parts of her identity across national borders. This documentary presents Kylie's attempts to connect with her relatives in Hainan, showing us what might happen when Singaporeans become more curious about their ethnic roots/heritage and whether this challenges, or even changes their perception of national identity.

### **Principle Crew Members:**

Director – Nicole Lim Xuan

Producer – Syed Ebrahim Al-Idrus

Editor – Esna Ong Ee Na

Director of Photography – Zhang Ziyu, Violet

### **Contact information:**

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/twoislandsdocumentary/>

Instagram: <http://instagram.com/twoislandsfilm>

**“This work was produced as a final-year project for the Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.”**

## 5.2 Project Background Sheet

### **Inspiration for the project:**

The Singaporean Chinese identity has evolved into a burgeoning question mark. As students in a globalised world, we began to question what it means to be Singaporean and what it means to be Singaporean Chinese, and found that such concerns resonate among our other peers as well. Further research indicates that many young Singaporeans are in the midst of experiencing a transition in identity due to the loss of culture and a dilution of influences. This results in an ambiguous understanding of self. We believe that this will affect our collective future and that having a better understanding of who we are now will determine how we progress as a nation. This is an issue that concerns all Singaporeans.

Driven by our interest in the topic and our personal struggles with identity, we decided to embark on this documentary as a means to discover a new impetus to redefine ourselves.

### **Challenges faced:**

In initial stages, our team struggled to find a story arc that was engaging enough as Kylie's character did not peak or change in her personal journey with her Hainan family. Previously, the team was banking on a number of potential arcs that surfaced through pre-trip interviews to carry the film - however the situation on the ground did not match up to our scripting and required some major recalibration. Some possibilities that did not materialise included: (1) A resolution of generational hurt that both Kylie's grandfather and grandaunt held towards their mother, which passed on to Kylie through the form of inner rage. (2) Kylie's immediate family finding Woon ancestral records in Hainan to update in their Mormon church's system of locating eternal family trees

### **What's in the future for the project and for producers:**

We plan to reach both our target audiences through social media outreach and various film distribution channels. For example, in order for our film to have a greater ripple effect on our Singaporean audience, we launched a social media outreach contest on our Instagram and Facebook handles. The contest aims to get fellow Singaporeans to reflect about a person or object that encapsulates their ethnic background. Ultimately, we aim to release the film on various platforms, including international film festivals as well as other film festivals with a focus on youth and culture such as the Hainan International Film Festival (China), National Youth Film Awards (Singapore), Singapore International Film Festival, Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival (France), Sundance Festival (USA), Short Shorts Film Festival (Japan) and the Asia South East Short Film Festival (Cambodia).

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### 5.3 Production Stills



*During our first 2 days in Hainan, Kylie's family took us on a recce of the surrounding area. Here, we stop for a tea break. (L-R) Syed Ebrahim Al-Idrus, Esna Ong, Shu Ming, Yue Hua, Kylie's eldest cousin's husband, Kylie Woon*



*Two Islands team filming Kylie's family birthday surprise on our second night there. (L-R) Shu Ming, Violet Zhang, Kylie's eldest cousin, Esna Ong, Xiao Li, Yue Hua, Kylie Woon*



*Before the interview with Yue Hua, one of Kylie's closest cousins, Team Two Islands films the pair going through some old photos. (L-R) Yue Hua, Nicole Lim, Kylie Woon, Violet Zhang*



*The team meeting translators to prepare for the upcoming interview with Kylie's grandaunt in Hainanese. (L-R) Violet Zhang, Nicole Lim, Lin Xue Bing (translator/fixer), Chen Ai Ping (translator), Esna Ong*



*An emotional interview with Kylie's grandaunt, with translators on hand. (L-R) Violet Zhang, Chen Ai Ping, Lin Xue Bing, Woon Wen Fang (Grandaunt), Nicole Lim, Kylie Woon*



*While we were in Hainan, our translator Xue Bing had a friend that was also part of the Yun/Woon family. Once he heard that Kylie was also a Woon, he brought us to the Woon Ancestral Hall and explained to Kylie the history of the place and their family name. (L-R) Yun Li, Kylie Woon*



*After a long morning or afternoon of filming, Kylie's family would always cook for us. Here, we have lunch during our first visit to Biao Jie Yue Hua's house*



*A group photo of the Yun/Woon family with the Two Islands team on our last night of filming in Tan Niu Village*

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PRODUCED BY SYED EBRAHIM BIN SYED ABDULLAH AL-IDRUS MUSIC BY JONJOE ONG EDITED BY ESNA ONG EE NA DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ZHANG ZIYU, VIOLET DIRECTED BY NICOLE LIM XUAN

# Two Islands

She's going back to the beginning.



*Official poster, "Two Islands"*