



5th International
Film Festival &
Awards • Macao



A Film By
Mark Chua & Lam Li Shuen

THE CUP

THE CUP (2020)

Film Type: Short Film

Genre: Experimental

Runtime: 17 min

Completion Date: 1 September 2020

Production Country: Singapore

Film Language: Teochew (Chinese Dialect), Cebuano

Subtitle Language: English

Shooting Format: Digital 4K

Screening Format: DCP, ProRes 422

Film Colour: Black & White

Aspect Ratio: 1.85:1

Website & Trailer

<https://www.emoumie.com/thecup>

Contact

Emoumie (Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen)

emoumie@gmail.com

www.emoumie.com

+65 91394354



The Cup (2020)

Directed by Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen

Contact: emoumie@gmail.com

SYNOPSIS

In a surreal tableau, a man with a brewing machine for a head, discontent with the bland taste of the brew from his own body, attempts to do what he can to improve its flavour.

The Cup is a meditation on being in the world, upon the flattening out of life as we know and image it during the coronavirus pandemic. It was shot and produced while the filmmakers were confined to their home during the lockdown period in Singapore.



SCREENINGS / AWARDS

31st Singapore International Film Festival, In Competition (November 2020)
5th International Film Festival & Awards Macao, In Competition (December 2020)
51st Tampere Film Festival, In Competition (March 2021)
Julius Baer Next Generation Art Prize, **First Prize - Moving Images** (April 2021)
Asian Film Archive - Singapore Shorts (August 2021)
7th Minikino Film Week (September 2021)
8th Riga International Film Festival, In Competition (October 2021)
22nd San Diego Asian Film Festival, In Competition (November 2021)
10th Dharamshala International Film Festival (November 2021)
11th Binisaya Film Festival, **Best Film - Binisaya World** (November 2021)
7th San Diego Underground Film Festival (December 2021)

DIRECTORS' BIO



Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen are Singaporean filmmakers and artists whose work explores the possibilities of resistance in the presentation and production of narrativity.

Their short films have screened at international film festivals including the 65th BFI London Film Festival (2021), 51st Tampere Film Festival (2021) and International Film Festival & Awards Macao (2020). In 2021, with their short film *A Man Trembles*, they were awarded Best Southeast Asian Director at the 32nd Singapore International Film Festival. Their second experimental feature *Revolution Launderette* screened at the 30th Singapore International Film Festival (2019), Asian Film Festival Barcelona (2020), Mammoth Lakes Film Festival (2020) among others, and won the Spirit Award at the Eastern Oregon Film Festival (2020).

The Cup (2020)
Directed by Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen
Contact: emoumie@gmail.com

DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

The Cup is a meditation on being in the world, upon the flattening out of life as we know and image it during the pandemic. It was shot and produced in our home during the lockdown period in Singapore, and an early version was first presented as part of a group exhibition 'flat' at Sullivan+Strumpf Gallery (Singapore).

The pandemic and its effects, in some sense, have profoundly altered our envisioning of being in the world. Perhaps due to the large intersection of our collective lived experience in this period around the globe. While the restrictions in daily life protect oneself as well as the general public from the spread of the pandemic, they seem to have resulted in an observably diminished joy of life for many. Bringing to surface a dissatisfaction with simply being, in this more isolated, restricted way.

The film, as a picture of and from the flattening out of life during the pandemic, hopes to explore the notion that perhaps what felt missing during the lockdown - where satisfaction and a 'more joyous life' lie in - was the freedoms to individually curate and have the choice of risking our lives how we see fit, in various engagements, something we had in life before the pandemic.

Perhaps we felt such a joy of life when death, its elusion and risking it was in a way of our choice, in which arises the inexplicable tangle of the living we want, and how we live.



CREDITS

CAST

Voiceover
Karl Lucente
Richard Chua

CREW

Directors, Writers, Producers
Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen

Editing
Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen

Sound Design
Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen

SPECIAL THANKS

Louis Ho
Megan Arlin

PRESS / ARTICLES

Financial Times, Kristina Foster, "Art prize winners use technology to tackle Southeast Asia's big issues" (2021)

<https://www.ft.com/content/6c20bf2d-6199-45d0-8635-8a47224e32c9>

"With its intimate scenes of domestic interiors and mingling of the banal with the surreal, it's not hard to see why such an absurdist tale would resonate with the universal sense of ennui and estrangement felt the world over. The film captures the machine-like existence of the pandemic, the monotony, the lack of individual agency and, above all, the longing for variety."

Sinema, Matthaeus Choo, "Interview: Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen, Directors of The Cup" (2020)

<https://www.sinema.sg/2020/11/28/interview-mark-chua-and-lam-li-shuen/>

"Made during the circuit breaker period earlier this year and in collaboration with Cebu musician Karl Lucente while he was under lockdown, the experimental short film is very much a product of the global pandemic. Gorgeously shot in black and white, the short brings across the anxiety, the fatigue, and the quiet self-introspection that has dawned on all of us this year."

The Straits Times, Toh Wen Li, "Singapore short film wins digital art prize" (2021)

<https://www.straitstimes.com/life/arts/spore-short-film-wins-digital-art-prize>

Asian Film Archive, Wong Kar Mun Nicole, "Embodied Desires" (2021)

https://www.asianfilmarchive.org/embodied-desires/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=embodied-desires

"Isolation permeates The Cup. From the window grills to the outlines of the kitchen cupboards, lines criss-cross through the film entrapping the audience too in the contained environment within which the protagonist exists alone, accompanied only by his curated selection of routines. The sharp black-and white contrasts of the film emphasise this. In watching a film that has been stripped of colour, we are more attuned to the tactility of his experiences, be it the heat of his morning coffee or the glide of cool rain on his skin."

Udine Far East Film Festival (Catalogue), Warren Sin, "BEATING THE CIRCUIT BREAKER: SINGAPORE FILMS IN 2020/21" (2021)

<https://www.fareastfilm.com/eng/archive/catalogue/2021/premere-il-salvavita-i-film-di-singapore-nel-2020-21/?IDLYT=31711>

Singapore International Film Festival Film Academy, Joellene Yap, "Coffee at Arm's Length" (2020)

https://filmacademy.sgiff.com/featured/coffee-at-arms-length/?fbclid=IwAR2aj3zHTJa5fbsbMW3N6kuv8DRjIPIISS3eoQchtK3Z3G_lxPY5AE7DUCo

The Cup (2020)

Directed by Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen

Contact: emoumie@gmail.com