

ใจจ๋าลอง

Come Here

A film by Anocha Suwichakornpong

2021, 69 Minutes, Thailand, Black & White, Aspect Ratio 4:3, DCP, 5.1 Sound, In Thai with English Subtitles





SYNOPSIS

Four friends in their mid-twenties go to Kanchanaburi, west of Thailand, on a trip. They visit the World War II memorial site of the 'Death Railway', built to honor tens of thousands war prisoners who lost their lives here.

At night, back at the raft house, they are drinking, smoking weed, and talking randomly. Once in a while, someone would act out a scene from a play - it turns out they are all actors in the same theatre company.

Running parallel to this narrative is the story of another woman who finds herself alone in the middle of the forest after her friend mysteriously disappears. The four friends in the raft house say something that might allude to that woman, but it is not certain. The woman finds a natural stream. She drinks, washes her face, and then goes into the water. Her face begins to transform into another person's.

It's getting late, all the friends are intoxicated. Some pass out in the bedroom. Only two are left by themselves. Romance is in the air.

Fireworks go off, one after another, high up in the night sky. Each of them begin to wake up and they all stand still, watching the beautiful fireworks shooting up the sky and disappear one by one.





Director's Note

I decided to make this film on a humid morning in January in 2018, the New Year's Eve fireworks from the previous night still popping in my head. After having spent the better part of a decade writing, shooting and then traveling with my second feature, I was determined to make a new film, but this time I would shoot the whole thing in one week, edit it in two, and release it quietly and quickly with as little fuss as possible. I wanted to make a film that was modest in scale, allowing for fluidity and improvisation.

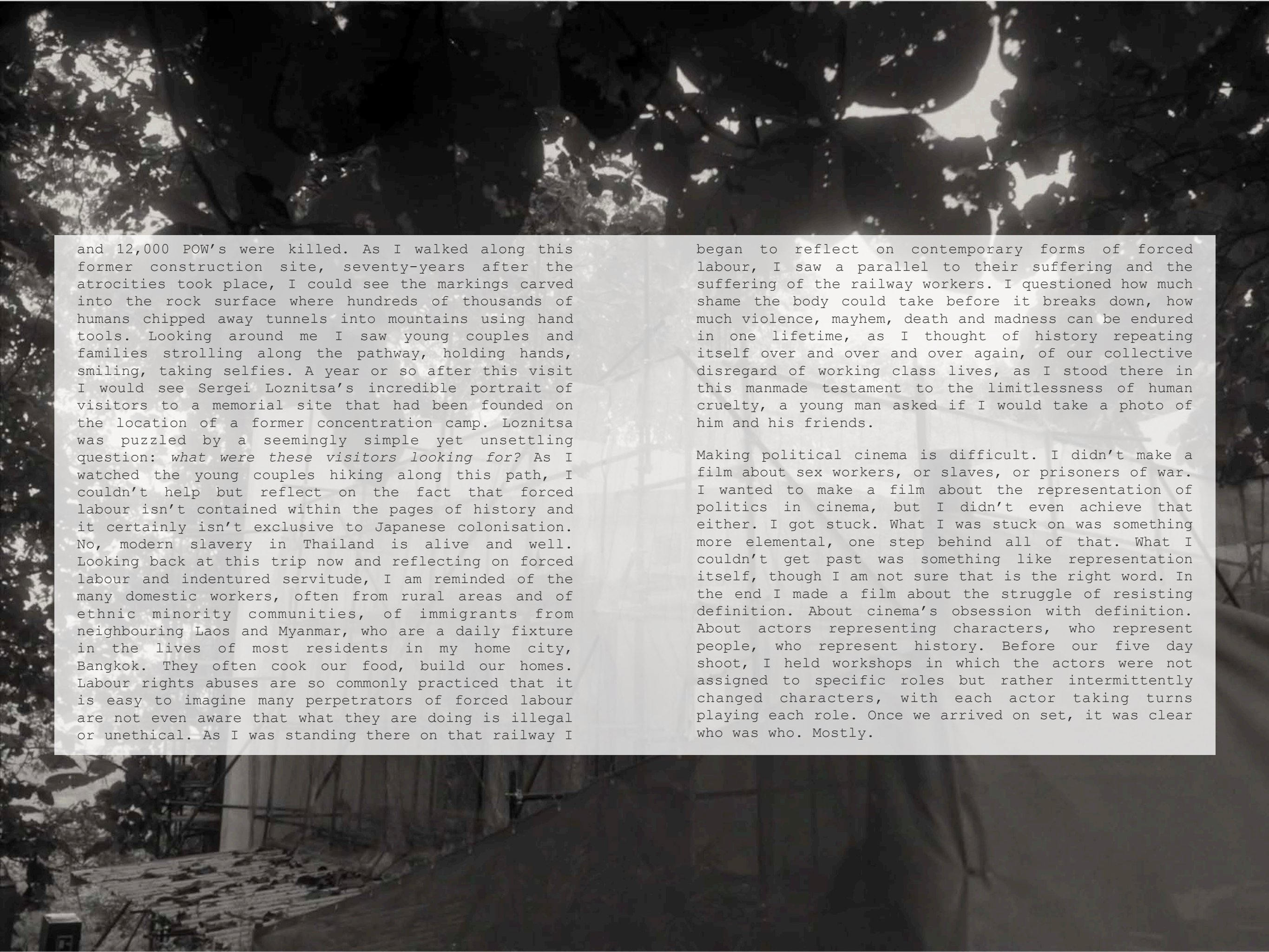
By keeping the budget extremely low, I was able to avoid the often overwhelming and time consuming process of applying to script labs, development programs, traditional financing and whatever else the international indie film industrial complex requires directors to do these days. With the money my production company had left over from a previous project along with a couple modest contributions along the way, I was able to shoot this film without a script, any proper production plan, or indeed any real narrative to speak of.

Initially, I hit the ground running. The whole thing was filmed in just five days. Having accepted a position as visiting lecturer at Harvard University, I promised myself that I would spend the first few weekends in Boston editing the film, aiming to release it in 2019. But here we are, three years later and the

footage I shot back then is only finally seeing the light of day now. In the intervening years since I first shot this material I have gotten married, had a baby, moved to another country, moved back to Thailand, and shot, edited and released a completely different feature film. I am still not exactly sure why or how that happened.

In any case, the spontaneous little film that I made is finally here and now that I see it in front of me and I am being asked to write about it, I am trying to remember what I was thinking when I first decided to make it.

The starting point? A trip I had taken in 2015 to a province in the western part of Thailand, on the border with Myanmar. Known for various tourist attractions including waterfalls, raft houses, and tamarinds, it is also the site of a forced labour camp during the second world war. Now that I think about it, the initial impetus for this film probably occurred to me while walking along a railroad that had been hand chiselled into the surrounding rock surface by a mix of Southeast Asian civilian slaves and allied POW's who were forcibly drafted into the service of the Empire of Japan (which occupied Thailand during the war). As a direct result of the labour conditions during the construction of the railway, including torture, extreme violence, physical abuse, and neglect, 90,000 civilians



and 12,000 POW's were killed. As I walked along this former construction site, seventy-years after the atrocities took place, I could see the markings carved into the rock surface where hundreds of thousands of humans chipped away tunnels into mountains using hand tools. Looking around me I saw young couples and families strolling along the pathway, holding hands, smiling, taking selfies. A year or so after this visit I would see Sergei Loznitsa's incredible portrait of visitors to a memorial site that had been founded on the location of a former concentration camp. Loznitsa was puzzled by a seemingly simple yet unsettling question: *what were these visitors looking for?* As I watched the young couples hiking along this path, I couldn't help but reflect on the fact that forced labour isn't contained within the pages of history and it certainly isn't exclusive to Japanese colonisation. No, modern slavery in Thailand is alive and well. Looking back at this trip now and reflecting on forced labour and indentured servitude, I am reminded of the many domestic workers, often from rural areas and of ethnic minority communities, of immigrants from neighbouring Laos and Myanmar, who are a daily fixture in the lives of most residents in my home city, Bangkok. They often cook our food, build our homes. Labour rights abuses are so commonly practiced that it is easy to imagine many perpetrators of forced labour are not even aware that what they are doing is illegal or unethical. As I was standing there on that railway I

began to reflect on contemporary forms of forced labour, I saw a parallel to their suffering and the suffering of the railway workers. I questioned how much shame the body could take before it breaks down, how much violence, mayhem, death and madness can be endured in one lifetime, as I thought of history repeating itself over and over and over again, of our collective disregard of working class lives, as I stood there in this manmade testament to the limitlessness of human cruelty, a young man asked if I would take a photo of him and his friends.

Making political cinema is difficult. I didn't make a film about sex workers, or slaves, or prisoners of war. I wanted to make a film about the representation of politics in cinema, but I didn't even achieve that either. I got stuck. What I was stuck on was something more elemental, one step behind all of that. What I couldn't get past was something like representation itself, though I am not sure that is the right word. In the end I made a film about the struggle of resisting definition. About cinema's obsession with definition. About actors representing characters, who represent people, who represent history. Before our five day shoot, I held workshops in which the actors were not assigned to specific roles but rather intermittently changed characters, with each actor taking turns playing each role. Once we arrived on set, it was clear who was who. Mostly.

Director's Biography



Anocha Suwichakornpong

Anocha Suwichakornpong is a filmmaker whose work is informed by the socio-political history of Thailand. Her films have been the subject of retrospectives at the Museum of the Moving Image, New York; TIFF Cinematheque, Toronto; Cinema Moderne, Montreal; and Olhar De Cinema, Brazil. By the Time It Gets Dark, Anocha's second feature, centres around a student massacre that took place in 1976 by Thai state forces and far-right paramilitaries at Thammasat University in Bangkok. It premiered at Locarno Film Festival and was presented at festivals worldwide, including Toronto, BFI London, Viennale, and Rotterdam. By the Time It Gets Dark film won three Thailand National Film Awards including Best Picture and Best Director. In 2017, it was chosen as Thailand's Oscar entry for Best Foreign Language Film. Mundane History, her first feature, won numerous awards including the Tiger Award at Rotterdam. An allegory for the current political situation in Thailand, the film focuses on the relationship between a father and his paraplegic son. Her third feature, Krabi 2562, co-directed with British filmmaker Ben Rivers, explores a town in southern Thailand. The film also premiered at Locarno and is currently touring the festival circuit. Anocha received her MFA from Columbia University, with her thesis film, Graceland, becoming the first Thai short film to be officially selected by Cannes Film Festival. In 2017, together with Visra Vichit-Vadakan and Aditya Assarat, she founded Purin Pictures, an initiative to support Southeast Asian cinema. Currently, Between 2018 and 2020, Anocha was a visiting lecturer at the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard University. In 2019, Anocha was named a Prince Claus Laureate.

Selected Filmography

COME HERE (2021)

- Berlinale, Forum

KRABI, 2562 (2019)

- Locarno Film Festival, Moving Ahead

NIGHTFALL (2016)

- International Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen

BY THE TIME IT GETS DARK (2016)

- Locarno Film Festival, Concorso Internazionale

OVERSEAS (2012)

- Locarno Film Festival

MUNDANE HISTORY (2009)

- International Film Festival Rotterdam, Tiger Award Winner

JAI (2007)

- International Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, Special Mention Award

GRACELAND (2006)

- Cannes Film Festival, Cinéfondation



Sound



Ernst Karel

Ernst Karel works in the area of reality-based audio, including sound recording, composing, and sound design. He is an affiliate of the Sensory Ethnography Lab and has worked with filmmakers Elizabeth Lo, Brett Story, Trương Minh Quỳ, Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel, and others. In addition to *Jai jumlong (Come Here)*, he also did location sound recording and sound design for Anocha Suwichakornpong's collaboration with Ben Rivers, *Krabi 2562*. As a director, his collaboration with Veronika Kusumaryati, *Expedition Content*, made from the audio archives of the so-called 'Harvard Peabody Expedition to Netherlands New Guinea' from 1961, premiered in the 2020 Berlinale Forum Expanded.

Selected Filmography

COME HERE (Dir. Anocha Suwichakornpong, 2021)

- 2021 Berlinale, Forum

KRABI, 2562 (Dir. Anocha Suwichakornpong, Ben Rivers, 2019)

- Locarno Film Festival, Concorso Internazionale

THE SKY TREMBLES AND THE EARTH IS AFRAID AND THE TWO EYES ARE NOT BROTHERS (Dir. Ben Rivers, 2015)

- Locarno Film Festival

MANAKAMANA (Dir. Stephanie Spray, Pacho Velez, 2013)

- Locarno Film Festival, Golden Leopard

LEVIATHAN (Dir. Lucien Castaing-Taylor, Verena Paravel, 2012)

- Locarno Film Festival



Producer's Biography



Parinee Buthrasri

Parinee Buthrasri is a cinematographer and producer based in Thailand and Czech Republic. Buthrasri began her career at Electric Eel films in 2009 as a still photographer on *Mundane History* (2009). She has worked with many establishing Thai independent directors such as; Anocha Suwichakornpong, Aditya Assarat and Lee Chatametikul. It was during this time that she began to develop her skills in visual storytelling and her passion for cinema.

Her works as cinematographer includes *A Room With A Coconut View* (Dir. Tulapop Saenjaroen, 2018), which had its world premiere at 71st Locarno Film Festival and won awards from many film festivals such as; Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur, Moscow International Experimental Film Festival and Arkipel Festival Jakarta. In 2020, with the same collaboration, *People on Sunday*, which had its premiere at 49th International Film Festival Rotterdam. Additionally, in 2019, Buthrasri shot, *Buried Dead Mountain* (Dir. Primrin Paurat), a feature documentary focusing on the problem in trash dumping in Thailand. The film was selected to participate at If/Then Short Documentary program 2012, arranged by IDFA International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam.

Currently, Buthrasri is based mostly in Prague, Czech Republic, where she pursues her MA in cinematography at Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts (FAMU). Her upcoming short is *Lemongrass Girl* (Dir. Pom Bunsermvicha, 2021) which is selected for main competition short program, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021.

Selected Filmography:

Producer

COME HERE (Dir. Anocha Suwichakornpong, 2021)
- 2021 Berlinale, Forum

LEMONGRASS GIRL (Dir. Pom Bunsermvicha, 2021)
- 2021 International Film Festival Rotterdam

NAKORN-SAWAN (Dir. Puangsoi Aksornsawang, 2018)
- 2018 Busan International Film Festival

A ROOM WITH A COCONUT VIEW (Dir. Tulapop Saenjaroen, 2018)
- 2018 Locarno Film Festival

Producer's Biography



Mai Meksawan

Mai Meksawan worked at the Bangkok International Film Festival since 2004, and was its programmer until the festival's final edition in 2009. In 2007 he co-founded, with Pimpaka Towira and Ruengsang Sripaoraya, a production & distribution company Extra Virgin. Its most successful title, *AGRARIAN UTOPIA* (dir. Uruphong Raksasad) screened in more than 100 film festivals worldwide and received 11 international awards. He founded Diversion in 2014. His most recent film as producer is *MANTA RAY* (dir. Phuttiphong Aroonpheng), winner of Orizzonti Award for Best Film at 2018 Venice Film Festival. His upcoming projects include Jakrawal Nilthamrong's *ANATOMY OF TIME* (co-production with France's Damned Films, The Netherlands' Sluizer Film Productions and Singapore's M'GO Films), Uruphong Raksasad's *WORSHIP* (with support from MPA APSA Academy Film Fund and SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant) and Phuttiphong Aroonpheng's next project *MORRISON* (co-production with France's CG Cinéma).

Selected Filmography:

Associate Producer

AGRARIAN UTOPIA (dir. Uruphong Raksasad, 2009)

- 11 International Awards including UNESCO Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Promotion and Preservation of Cultural Diversity through Film

Producer

UNREAL FOREST (dir. Jakrawal Nilthamrong, 2010)

- Rotterdam, Göteborg and Yamagata film festivals

MANTA RAY (dir. Phuttiphong Aroonpheng, 2018)

- Orizzonti Award for Best Film, 2018 Venice Film Festival

COME HERE (dir. Anocha Suwichakornpong, 2021)

- 2021 Berlinale, Forum

ANATOMY OF TIME (dir. Jakrawal Nilthamrong, in post-production)

- Co-producers: Damned Films (France), Sluizer Film Productions (The Netherlands), M'GO Films (Singapore)

- Funds: Aide aux cinémas du monde, NFF+HBF, World Cinema Fund, Southeast Asian Co-Production Grant, Nouvelle-Aquitaine Région

WORSHIP (dir. Uruphong Raksasad, in post-production)

- Funds: MPA APSA Academy Film Fund, SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant

MORRISON (dir. Phuttiphong Aroonpheng, in pre-production)

- Co-Producer: CG Cinéma (France)

- Fund: Aide aux cinémas du monde

SOLIDS BY THE SEASHORE (dir. Patiparn Boontarig, in pre-production)

Cast

SAIPARN Apinya Sakuljaroensuk


SORN Sornrapat Patharakorn

WAY Waywiree Ittianunkul

AIM Bhumibhat Thavornsiri

TOO Sirat Intarachote





Crew

Writer / Director

Anocha Suwichakornpong

Producers

Parinee Buthrasri
Mai Meksawan

Co-Producers

Pom Bunsermvicha
Maenum Chagasik
Tulapop Saenjaroen
Paul Charbonneau

Director of Photography

Boonyanuch Kraithong

Production Designer

Akekarat Homlaor

Costume Designer

Rujirumpai Mongkol

Editor

Aacharee Ungsriwong

Sound

Ernst Karel

Production Company Profile

Electric Eel Films

Electric Eel Films is a production company based in Bangkok, Thailand. Founded in 2006 by a group of up-and-coming and independent filmmakers, we are a small but high quality production house specializing in independent films and other media productions.

Electric Eel Films seeks to be a new force of independent cinema in Asia. Our main aim is to produce challenging films with high artistic value. Although we are a small company, we have a network of talented and experienced filmmakers working with us, including Anocha Suwichakornpong (director/producer), Tulapop Saenjaroen (director), Leung Ming Kai (director/cinematographer), Maenum Chagasik(producer), Parinee Buthrasri (producer/cinematographer), and Acharee Ungsriwong (editor).

www.electriceelfilms.com

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Selected Film Projects:

A Room with a Coconut View (HD, 29 mins, 2018)
By the Time It Gets Dark (HD, 105 min, 2016)
Concrete Clouds (35mm, 100 min, 2013)
Overseas (HD, 16 min, 2012)
In April the Following Year, There was a Fire (HD, 76 min, 2012)
Mundane History (35mm, 82 min, 2009)
Four Boys, White Whiskey and Grilled Mouse (HD, 10 min, 2009)
Lunch (HD, 30 min, 2010)
Like. Real. Love (DV, 37 min, 2007)
3-0 (DV, 8 min, 2006)
Graceland (35mm, 17 min, 2006)

Diversion

Diversion was founded in 2014 by Mai Meksawan, a former Bangkok International Film Festival programmer and co-founder of production & distribution company Extra Virgin. Its first project is VANISHING POINT (dir. Jakrawal Nilthamrong), winner of the 2015 Hivos Tiger Award at Rotterdam and in competitions at Hong Kong, Taipei, New Horizons, Malatya, Xining and Tokyo FILMeX. Its most recent film, Phuttiphong Aronpheng's directorial debut MANTA RAY, won the Orizzonti Award for Best Film at 2018 Venice Film Festival. Its upcoming projects include Jakrawal Nilthamrong's ANATOMY OF TIME, Uruphong Raksasad's WORSHIP, Anocha Suwichakornpong's COME HERE, Patiparn Boontarig's SOLIDS BY THE SEASHORE and Phuttiphong Aroonpheng's MORRISON.

www.diversion-th.com

Email: films@diversion-th.com

Selected Film Projects:

Vanishing Point (105 min, 2015)
Manta Ray (100 min, 2018)
Anatomy of Time (in post-production)
Worship (in post-production)
Morrison (in pre-production)
Solids by the Seashore (in pre-production)



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REDIANCE