

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***SCAPE NATIONAL YOUTH FILM AWARDS (NYFA) 2021 ANNOUNCES
56 NOMINEES**

- The Covid-19 pandemic did not stop youths from their creativity and passion in filmmaking

SINGAPORE, 22 JUNE 2021 - The 7th National Youth Film Awards (NYFA) today announces 56 films that showcase a new wave of filmmakers for Singapore's film industry.

Held by *SCAPE, an organisation that supports the development of Singaporean youths, the platform saw a total of 330 submissions this year.

The most prominent themes this year were mental health, self-discovery, as well as the importance of human connection as we battle through the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the nominated films were also filmed during the Circuit Breaker to showcase how Singaporeans are powering through the unforeseen challenges posed.

Covid-19 could not stop creativity and passion

One film that showcased the different sides of how Singaporeans battled the Circuit Breaker period is "A Little Closer" by Cheryl Mong from the Student category. The film revolves around Ashwin, a young Indian man, who works as a Stay-Home Caller during the pandemic. While working from home, he forms an unlikely friendship with a Chinese elderly lady who helps him discover the importance of tradition and family.

The pre-jury praised how relevant the storyline is today – especially the discussion on how Singaporeans are adapting to the aftereffects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, "The Cup" by Mark Chua and Lam Li Shuen from the Open Youth category, was highly regarded by the jurors for how the filmmaker took a risk to showcase a different style of storytelling.

"In the first half of 2020, we observed how the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns affected so many of us around the world, both individually and collectively," said Mark Chua. "We were struck by how there was a tangle between the kind of living we wanted and the lived experience of the lockdown. So we wanted to make a film that offered a humorous take on that and ask why there was this dissatisfaction and seeming flattening out of life. With the limitations posed, we had to get creative to execute some of practical effects."

The film is about a man with a brewing machine as his head and how he attempts to improve the bland flavour of his own body. The film uses surrealism to showcase the uncertainty and lack of joy Singaporeans felt during the pandemic. The entire film was shot and produced during the Circuit Breaker, while the filmmakers were confined at home.

Singaporean youth filmmakers are more prepared than expected

"2021 was as challenging as we expected it to be, but our youth filmmakers well exceeded our expectations," said Ivy Lim, Executive Director of *SCAPE. "Even though the youths faced an uphill battle to complete their films during these uncertain times, the 330 NYFA 2021 submissions proved otherwise. As a youth organisation, we are proud of our youths who demonstrated resilience in pursuing their passion despite the limitations presented."

The pre-selection jurors shared similar sentiments. Many highlighted how this year's submissions included films that are award-worthy.

"Overall, I was very impressed with the diversity and quality of the submissions – from the acting to the scripts and the production values," said International Emmys nominee and this year's pre-selection juror of Open Youth category, Jaclyn Chan. "The nominations were shorts I connected with on a very visceral level. There were times where I was so drawn into a film that I forgot I was watching it as a juror."

Vietnamese filmmaker and pre-selection juror of Student category, Linh Duong, shared that she was surprised by the production level of the submissions. "I could see the amount of dedication that the students put into

their works, as well as the efforts to search for new storytelling language. Watching these films made me look forward to seeing how these students will evolve in the future. I'm positive we are blessed with a new wave of talented and responsible filmmakers."

Next stop - NYFA Awards 2021

NYFA will be hosting a closed-door screening of the nominated films for the nominees and media in early July.

The winners will be announced during a live online award ceremony on 24 July 2021.

In the meantime, the public can catch some of the nominees on *Reel Talk*, a NYFA web series hosted by Fly Entertainment artiste, Nikki Muller, on *SCAPE YouTube channel (@scapesg) on 14, 17 and 21 July.

More information on the nominated films can be found in the attached annex.

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About *SCAPE

*SCAPE Co. Ltd is a non-profit organisation with its mission and vision rooted in support of youth, talent and leadership development. The organisation aims to facilitate youth-oriented programmes and support within various communities of youth interest in Singapore. The youth of today will be inspired and empowered to **DREAM IT AND LIVE IT at *SCAPE!**

*SCAPE exists to serve and support youths to live their dreams and realise their full potentials. As the integrated talent and resource hub for young people in Singapore, *SCAPE offers a holistic network of programmes, communities, partners and facilities for youths to explore, create and strive. No dream is too small, no dream is too big. *SCAPE wants youths to be inspired to come forward and share their interests, share their dreams. Through guidance and facilitation, *SCAPE wants to see their dreams turn into ideas, and ideas into reality. Living their dreams should no longer be a dream at *SCAPE.

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About National Youth Film Awards

Since its inception in 2015, the National Youth Film Awards (NYFA) serves as a community that connects youths with an interest in filmmaking. It aims to be the launching pad for emerging filmmakers into the industry. Through NYFA, our alumni have gone on to earn further accolades on other regional and international film awards & festivals, some of whom have also been commissioned for various video campaigns by corporate and industry partners. Beyond an award platform, NYFA is committed to nurture the aspiration, vision, and creative spirit of our youths.

Together with industry partners and institutes of higher learning, the NYFA programme is designed to spark deeper conversations amongst like-minded individuals and supports artistic works from both aspiring and professional filmmakers. To date, NYFA has supported more than 3,000 youths, and received over 1,800 short films across the Student and Open Youth categories.



ANNEX A

Student Category

Live action		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
Gone Are The Moat And The Walls	Joshuah Lim En	Former puppet troupe leader, Zhang, returns to Singapore after 20 years when he received recurring dreams from the City God. As he searches for answers, Zhang faces a new Singapore he does not recognise.
释怀 (Holding On, Letting Go)	Lionel Seah	A family starts to crumble, after the passing of their grandmother.
A Little Closer	Cheryl Mong	A Stay-Home Caller must help a lost dementia-stricken lady find her husband or she would be left roaming around the streets alone during a pandemic in Singapore.
Scavenger	Nicholas Ong Kok Weng	An old homeless scavenger must gather offerings for her wedding or she won't be able to marry her late fiancé before he reincarnates.
GIRLS	Tamara Tan	'Girls' is about two underaged teenage girls who embark on a runaway from home. Their plans slowly fall apart as they spiral deeper into their discovery of self and maturity, eventually leading nowhere.
Booking	Haziq Adam De Silva	A taxi driver must form a risqué partnership with a social escort to protect his daughter from bankruptcy.
Skeletons In The Closet	Brendan Mayle Kor Chong Li	After an intimate encounter in a closet, a university freshman embarks on an obsessive journey to unravel the truth behind his roommate's sexuality.

After	Monika Tsang	A family has difficulties readjusting to their lives after the grief and loss from their father's death.
Rocketship	Mathias Choo	Ten-year-old Samuel takes it upon himself to save his parent's marriage by recreating a precious shared memory.
As Bold as Red, As Soft as Velvet	Nguyen Minh Truong Giang	A queer man has to go through a maturity ritual to gain acceptance from others and himself.
Documentary		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
Eat What With Who	Stella Seetoh Wai Yeng	Deep diving into the online phenomenon of Mukbang, we explore more about the social needs of young Singaporean audiences.
Between These Bones	Li Jiaqi	An ode to the place we call home, and the ways people navigate life within her spaces
WallFlowers in the Parade	Tan Jit Jenn	Wallflowers in the Parade is a documentary film that chronicles the lives of Jehovah's Witnesses in Singapore that were imprisoned since 1972 due to their conscientious objection.
Mother & Daughter	Wee Antong	Mother & Daughter is a documentary that explores the life of matriarch Mdm Teo Kerk Eng and how her story affects her daughter and granddaughter in the present.
Sum of Our Parts	Olivia Tan Jia Yi	Against the backdrop of pragmatic Singapore, four local performance artists introduce their unconventional practice—the use of the body as a vessel for artistic expression.

Reflections of a Housewife	Alena Kristine Yeo	An exploration of the life of a housewife.
Tia Gong	Enkainia Lee	Two Ah Bengs question the label they grew up with through their everyday lives in this light-hearted documentary.
SORRY FOR EXISTING	Shelby Kho	We were all made from the same factory with different materials -- how does your heart beat, and how does your stomach sink?
Ah Ma Number One	Michelle Choo	Ah Ma Number one follows the journey of the director's grandma with dementia, during her transient period where she remembers that she is forgetting her memory.
Chop Thye Bee	Md Azman	The film examines the looming loss of the Chop Thye Bee convenience store and its 65-year legacy through the eyes of family members who reminisce its memories and ponder its fate.
Animation		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
Drive With Me	Huang Shiao-ya	Aiden decides to take a break from his corporate routine to take his suicidal wife on a road trip to nowhere.
Strange Occurrences: Bukit Bulabu	Wong Shi Teng, Hana Lee, Gloria Yeo	Two interviewees talk about their experience in the recently rediscovered bathroom atop the hill of Bukit Bulabu, joined by self-proclaimed superstitions expert Mdm Kok.
Tankboy	Novella	When Kevin's tears become never-ending and uncontrollable, he decides to put a tank on his head.
Bolder	Alex Li	A young wizard in training is forced to deal with not only her annoying classmate, but also an angry boulder.

BirdFeed	Chia Chin Yong	A Baker has lunch at a park. What could go wrong?
Full Circle	Yeow Su Xian	The Moon and Earth's relationship through a narrative medium — the journey through a sleepless night, conquering the semi-conscious moonlit world and the retrospective nature of the night.
To Kill the Birds & the Bees	Calleen Koh Yee Lin	To Kill the Birds & the Bees follows 3 separate stories of 4 average Singaporeans – a pair of young twins, a secondary school prefect, and a conservative housewife – who each encounter sexual situations in their day.
In Tune	Dianna Koh	In Tune is a short film about Ah Gong's fatherly love towards Cheepcheep, his songbird. Set in a park, Ah Gong transitions from a strict, guiding figure to one that puts his pet's desires over his own.
Grave Encounter	Hasya Amryna Nur Adly	Two ghosts fight over who gets to rest in peace, over a hole in a graveyard.
The Nights	Yap Jing Wen	The film is about 9 pm to 9 am as a loop of time every night.

Open Youth Category

Live action		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
The Cup	Mark Chua, Lam Li Shuen	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 Day The Rhythm Went Away	Cheng Chai Hong	A student goes out of sync with the world around him, and gradually finds himself losing all sense of self.
Heart Shape 莲蓉包	Lim Siew Rong	Heart Shape 莲蓉包 is a sprinkle of magic in the ordinary. It is the beginnings that blossom after endings, and an aching solitude where love still finds its way to flow.
In Between these Pages	Rifyal Giffari	When a woman brings her grandmother to stay with her after a fall, her personal, religious, and family values are questioned and criticised as her grandmother learns more about her lifestyle.
Tuition	Alistair Quak	ALAN, a 13 year old boy, tries to get evidence of abuse, while attending a tuition with a physically aggressive teacher.
Kasih Sayang Untuk Layla (Love For Layla)	Nur Munawarah Mohamed Hussain	When a young girl's mother travels abroad for work, she needs to find a way to overcome her longing for her mother and convince her strict grandmother to allow her to call her mother.
Guang Ming	Amanda Tan	KS, a single parent to his son, Feng, makes an honest living working as a car mechanic. The humble and driven KS finds his morals tested when a situation arises between him and the workshop's newest hire, Yue, a migrant worker from China. Caught in a dilemma, KS struggles to do what is right whilst setting an example for his son.

The Cabbage Statue	Megan Lim En	Seeing The Cabbage Statue of Ranau, Malaysia is an once-in-a-lifetime, never going to happen again experience: A presentation on why it is imperative that Ruth and Kelly go see this statue.
Dark Light	Vikneshwaran Silva	Mari, a construction worker in Singapore, seeks companionship on his day off, but instead gets into a misadventure that he will never forget.
Bulan	Syamsul Bahari	A 12-year-old boy secretly keeps his late grandfather's beloved pet beetle named Bulan without his mother knowing. He vows to keep his grandfather's promise of passing Bulan to a worthy pet owner before his mother finds out.
Documentary		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
partitions	Vishal Daryanomel	partitions tells a story of Sindhi migration to Singapore following the Partition of India in 1947, juxtaposing fragmented recollections of the past with enduring practices of the present.
The Spaces Between Us	Dave Lim, Adar Ng	Investigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on contemporary Singapore society, the film excavates the delicate balance between the interior lives of citizens and the society.
While You Were Sleeping	Jeremy Ho	A photographer revisits his body of work over the past two decades of dark spaces in Singapore, finding many of these places irrevocably changed.
Last Day Today	Liu Yihong	Due to the pandemic, Denny and Ivy, the largest poster retailer in Southeast Asia, decided to close their 16-year-old physical store in Singapore's landmark, the Esplanade.

148: Shangri-La Confectionery	Kyle Ong	This documentary tells a story of the iconic bakery's beginnings and the passing of the mantle to the next generation.
Just A Call Away	Jessica Heng	In the peak of circuit breaker, a moth flutters about the house, accompanied by conversations between grandparents and grandchildren. As snippets of daily life and tender longing play out, we remember the conveniently forgotten community that is just a call away.
Sleep Is A Waste Of Time	Chew Jia Hui	Live life to the fullest. Meet Nick, an artist / inventor / designer / multihyphenate who takes this saying to a whole other level.
A Short Film for my Son	Hariz Zulkifli	A father attempts to make a short film for his ever busy son in hopes of getting closer to him.
Animation		
Film title	Director(s)	Logline
Hindsight is 20/20	Yanyun Chen	A glimpse of a Singaporean artist's life under lockdown.
Would This Be Too Much To Ask For?	Lan Yu, Lim Joo Hwee	A glimpse into the life of a rough sleeper, where basic needs that were once taken for granted in everyday life become a luxury.
BANGAU	Fanny Bratahalim	A film exploring the (de)construction process of my diasporic identity.
Turning To Self-Surgery: A Transgender Woman's Journey	Lee Yu En	A transgender person shares the harsh realities of her life in China.
Breaking Bread	Elizabeth Xu Yuan Li	A question of what it means to love as God-fearing gay person.
Another Day in Paradise Part 5 (Animal)	Ang Geck Geck	Struggling to cope with isolation and loneliness during the pandemic, Lau finds an unexpected friend that changes his life.

The Visit	Morrie Tan	A young girl visits her father in prison. The glass in-between would never separate them anyways.
Waiting for the End – A Mother's Regret	Chew Jia Hui	An elderly lady writes a letter to her estranged child as she wastes away the last years of her life.