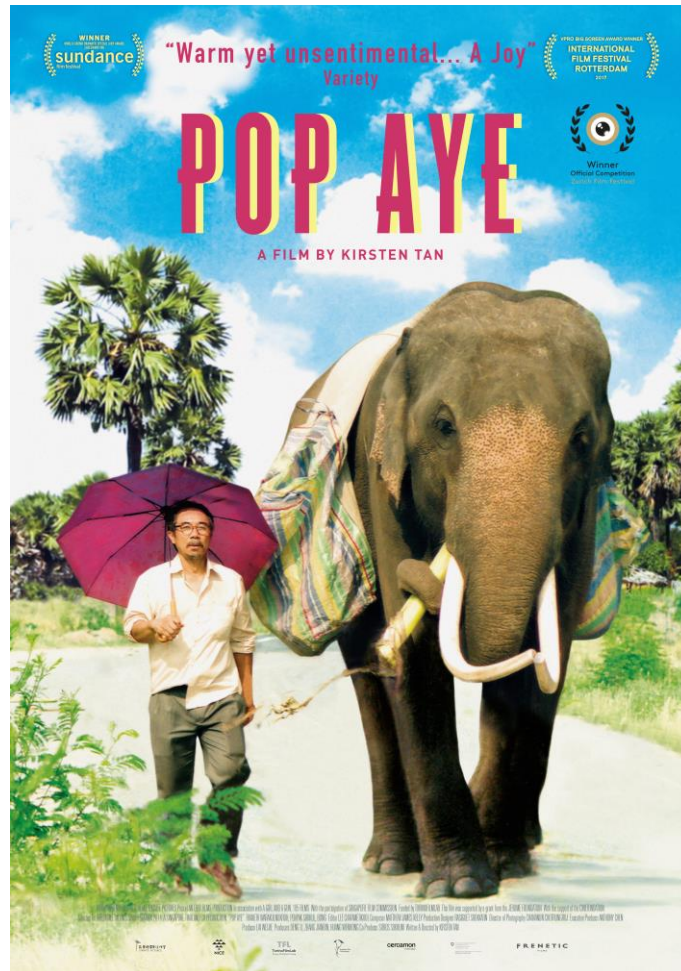




Winner
Official Competition
Zurich Film Festival



Ein Film von **Kirsten Tan**

Kinostart: 7. Juni 2018

Dauer: 102 min.

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SYNOPSIS

Thana, ein gefeierter Architekt, trifft in den Strassen von Bangkok auf den Elefanten Popaye. Er erkennt in ihm den Freund aus seiner Kindheit. Der Elefant muss als Attraktion Geld für seinen Besitzer verdienen. Thana, der sich gerade in einer schwierigen Lebensphase befindet, ist von dieser Begegnung zutiefst berührt. Kurzerhand kauft er den Elefanten und nimmt ihn mit nach Hause. Dort erschreckt er seine Frau so sehr, dass sie ihn fluchtartig verlässt. Thana beschliesst den Elefanten ins Dorf zurückzubringen, wo sie zusammen aufgewachsen sind. So beginnt ein abenteuerlicher Roadtrip quer durch Thailand.

Die in Singapur aufgewachsene Regisseurin Kirsten Tan wurde für ihr Spielfilmdebüt mehrfach ausgezeichnet. Sie gewann unter anderem in Sundance und am Zürich Film Festival, wo Sie das Goldene Auge des Besten internationalen Spielfilm erhielt.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I've always felt like a bit of a wanderer. Having lived in Singapore, Bangkok and New York within the last decade, I'm never sure where home is, and I've always felt for outsiders who don't sit comfortably within one particular system. POP AYE is essentially about two misfits—a man past his prime and his displaced street elephant—searching for meaning and belonging in space and time. Bangkok was the last place I lived before moving to New York. I was in my early twenties then, time seemed sprawling and infinite. I had a t-shirt shop at Chatuchak Market with my friends; we hardly made enough to cover rent, but we had fun. I travelled around Thailand a lot and whilst filming at a beach once, I witnessed a group of village boys pulling their elephant to sea to shower him. That memory of the elephant by the sea came up when I was writing POP AYE. It was not merely because it was beautiful, but because it was both mystical yet banal. This begs the question of whether the elephant in my film is a metaphor, but I don't have a didactic answer to that. With POP AYE, I wanted the elephant to be something that was true to my character's life. It was definitely not going to be an exotic, Disney elephant placed in there for colour. The elephant is as much a misfit as Thana feels himself to be. There is no space for him wherever he goes. I believe that life is—and has always been—simultaneously tragic and comic. It only depends on the perspective and distance with which one is watching events unfold. In my films, this inadvertent mixing of tragedy and comedy is important, because that is the truth of life. There's something both intimate yet distanced, warm yet cold. In POP AYE, one moment something is very serious and the next moment, it appears frivolous. Which is it really? It is neither and both because life is sad and beautiful at once, and time is the only constant, yet ever-changing. Time and its passage thereof has always been a big theme for me. Its effects add up, but we can't possibly be aware of how they will all add up, in life as we live it. The road-movie lends itself well to cinematic explorations of the journey, which of course is never just the journey on the road, but life's journey. In POP AYE, the way various moments add up in the plot—both in the road trip and in the arc of Thana's life—are testament to the quiet brutality of time. We live our lives moving forward even when we are doing nothing. Things are getting lost each second, and there is nothing we can do about it. Time is the witness to it all and when time shows its hand, do we laugh or do we cry?



KIRSTEN TAN (writer/director)

Kirsten Tan's works have screened at film festivals in Singapore, Rotterdam, Toronto, and Busan. Spotlighted by CNN's "Ones to Watch," she has received numerous international awards, including Best Southeast Asian Short Film for *Dahdi* (2014), and Best Director for *Fonzi* (2007) at the Singapore International Film Festival.

Her debut feature, *POP AYE*, developed at Berlinale Talents, TorinoFilmLab, where it won the Production Award, and Cannes Atelier, premiered in competition at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival.

SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY**POP AYE 2017**

- *World Cinema Dramatic Competition, Sundance Film Festival 2017*

Dahdi (Short) 2014

- *Best Southeast Asian Short Film, 25th Singapore International Film Festival*
- *Carl Lerner Award for Social Significance, NYU First Run Film Festival 2015*
- *Student Grant Awardee, National Board of Review 2015*
- *As Long As It Takes, 44th International Film Festival Rotterdam*
- *International Short Film Competition, 55th Kraków Film Festival*
- *S-Express, 19th Thai Short Film & Video Festival*
- *S-Express, 5th Wathann Film Festival*
- *S-Express, Minikino Film Week 2015*
- *Official Selection, 12th Singapore Shortcuts*
- *Pacific Showcase, 25th Hawaii International Film Festival*
- *International Competition, 46th Tampere Film Festival*

Cold Noodles (Short) 2009

- *Winner, Reel 13 Shorts*
- *Official Selection, Project Slingshot 2011*
- *Official Selection, 7th Singapore Shortcuts*
- *In Competition, 1st Singapore Short Film Awards*
- *In Competition, 15th Pusan International Film Festival*

Sink (Short) 2009

- *Best International Short Film, Planet In Focus 2010*
- *Best Cinematography, 1st Singapore Short Film Awards*
- *Official Selection, 2nd Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film Festival*
- *Official Selection, 13th Osian's Cinefan Film Festival*
- *Spectrum Showcase, 39th International Film Festival Rotterdam*
- *Official Selection, 10th International Bunker Film Festival*
- *Official Selection, Project Slingshot 2010*
- *Official Selection, 4th Experimental Film and Video Festival Seoul*
- *Official Selection, 7th Vladivostok International Film Festival*
- *In Competition, 22nd Singapore International Film Festival*

GIRAFFE PICTURES

Giraffe Pictures is a boutique film company founded by Singapore filmmaker Anthony Chen and producer Huang Wenhong. Based in Singapore, the company prides itself as a home for emerging filmmakers in Asia. Giraffe Pictures aims to become an international label for the best of Asian cinema, focusing on cinematic creativity and vision, telling unique Asian stories that will resonate with a global audience.

ANTHONY CHEN (Executive Producer)

Anthony Chen's films have won awards and screened at film festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Busan, Rotterdam, London, Dubai, Mumbai, Stockholm, and Melbourne. His debut feature film *Ilo Ilo*, was awarded the Camera d'Or at the 2013 Cannes Film Festival. It went on to pick up 40 awards at festivals worldwide including 4 Golden Horse Awards at the 50th Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan. Anthony was named as *Variety's* 10 Directors to watch in 2014. He recently launched Giraffe Pictures, a boutique film company with an aim to nurture and develop new voices in Asia.

LAI WEIJIE (Producer)

Lai Weijie is a film producer based in Singapore. His producing credits include the upcoming debut film by Kirsten Tan *POP AYE*, and her short film *Dahdi*, Best Southeast Asian Short Film at the 25th Singapore International Film Festival. He works closely with Anthony Chen's Giraffe Pictures and was producer for the Singapore/Taiwan segment of *Distance*, a film spanning four countries and starring Chen Bolin. As Project Manager at the Singapore International Film Festival, Weijie initiated two film mentorship programmes: the Southeast Asian Film Lab and the Youth Jury & Critics Programme.

CHANANUN CHOTRUNGROJ (Director of Photography)

Chananun Chotrungrroj is a director of photography and artist based in New York City and Bangkok. She served as Director of Photography alongside Sandi Sissel on the feature film *Karaoke Girl*, which premiered at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2012 and won the Best Cinematography award at the Bangkok Critics Assembly Awards. Her latest works include the feature films *Yosemite* by Gabrielle Demeestere, *Motel Mist* by Prabda Yoon and *POP AYE* by Kirsten Tan. While pursuing an MFA in Film at NYU, she was awarded the Ang Lee Fellowship and Department Fellowship and received Nestor Almendros Award for Outstanding Cinematography by a Woman in 2013 and 2015.

RASIGUET SOOKKARN (Production Designer)

After graduating from architecture school, Rasiguët Sookkarn started as an art director for several TV commercials and later made his way as production designer for many award-winning feature films such as *Eternity* by Sivaroj Kongsakul (Tiger Awards, Rotterdam Film Festival 2010), *P-047* by Kongdej Jaturanrassamee (Venice Film Festival 2011), *Tang-Wong* by Kongdej Jaturanrassamee (Berlin Film Festival 2012), *36* by Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit (New Currents Award, FIPRESCI Awards, Busan Film Festival 2012) and *Mary is Happy, Mary is Happy* by Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit (Venice Biennale Collage 2013). He has received many awards for his designs in his homeland and attended Berlinale Talents in 2014.

LEE CHATAMETIKOOL (Editor)

Lee Chatametikool is a Thai film editor and sound editor. He is a frequent collaborator with Apichatpong Weerasethakul where he worked on films including *Blissfully Yours*, *Syndromes and a Century* and *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall his Past Lives*. At the 2007 Asian Film Awards, Lee won the Best Editor award for *Syndromes and a Century*. He has also worked on commercial films including the hit Thai horror film, *Shutter*. Bangkok Film Critic's Assembly also named him Best Editor in 2008 for *Wonderful Town*. He took a break from editing to direct his debut feature film, *Concrete Clouds*, which premiered in Busan and was screened in competition at Rotterdam.

CAST

Popeye	BONG
Thana	THANETH WARAKULNUKROH
Bo	PENPAK SIRIKUL
Dee	CHAIWAT KHUMDEE
Jenny	YUKONTORN SUKKIJJA
Peak	NARONG PONGPAB

CREW

Executive Producer	ANTHONY CHEN
Producer	LAI WEIJIE
Producers	DENG LI, ZHANG JIANBIN, HUANG WENHONG
Co-Producer	SOROS SUKHUM
Line Producer	CATTLEEYA PAOSRIJAREON
Production Manager	PARINEE BUTHRASRI
Written & Directed by	KIRSTEN TAN
1st Assistant Director	PIPAT JOMKOTT, GAYLE HARIFF
2nd Assistant Director	CHINNAPAT POTHIEANG
Casting Director	SOIFA SAENKHAMKON, TIPPAWAN NARINTORN
Acting Coach	JARUNUN PHANTACHAT, ROMCHAT TANALAPPIPAT, PIANGPAITON SATRAWAHA, KEERATI SIVAKUAE
Location Manager	WITHIT CHANTHAMARIT
Location Assistant	SASIKARN GANMANEE, PAKKAWAT TANGHOM
Director of Photography	CHANANUN CHOTRUNGROJ
Focus Puller/Camera Operator	NAWAROPHAAT RUNGPHIBOONSOPHIT
1st Camera Assistant	CHARAN MUANG-ON
Production Designer	RASIGUET SOOKKARN
Art Director	MANOP CHAENGSAWANG
Assistant Art Director	MONKUM KHUKHUNTIN
Costume Designer	VISA KONGKA
Wardrobe/Costume	DAMMAROS SUKHABOON, NEERANUTE PATTAMASOOT
Makeup Artist	KUBOON KUNSOOKSAN, CHADA PIANKIT
Hair Stylist	THANON SONGSIL
Onset Photographer	LEK KIATSIRIKAJORN
Behind the Scenes Video	KONG PAHURAK
Editor	LEE CHATAMETIKOOL
Composer	MATTHEW JAMES KELLY
Supervising Sound Editor	LIM TING LI