

 61st International
Film Festival
Berlin
Forum

THE TERRORISTS
ผู้ก่อการร้าย
a film by ชุติมา Thunskā

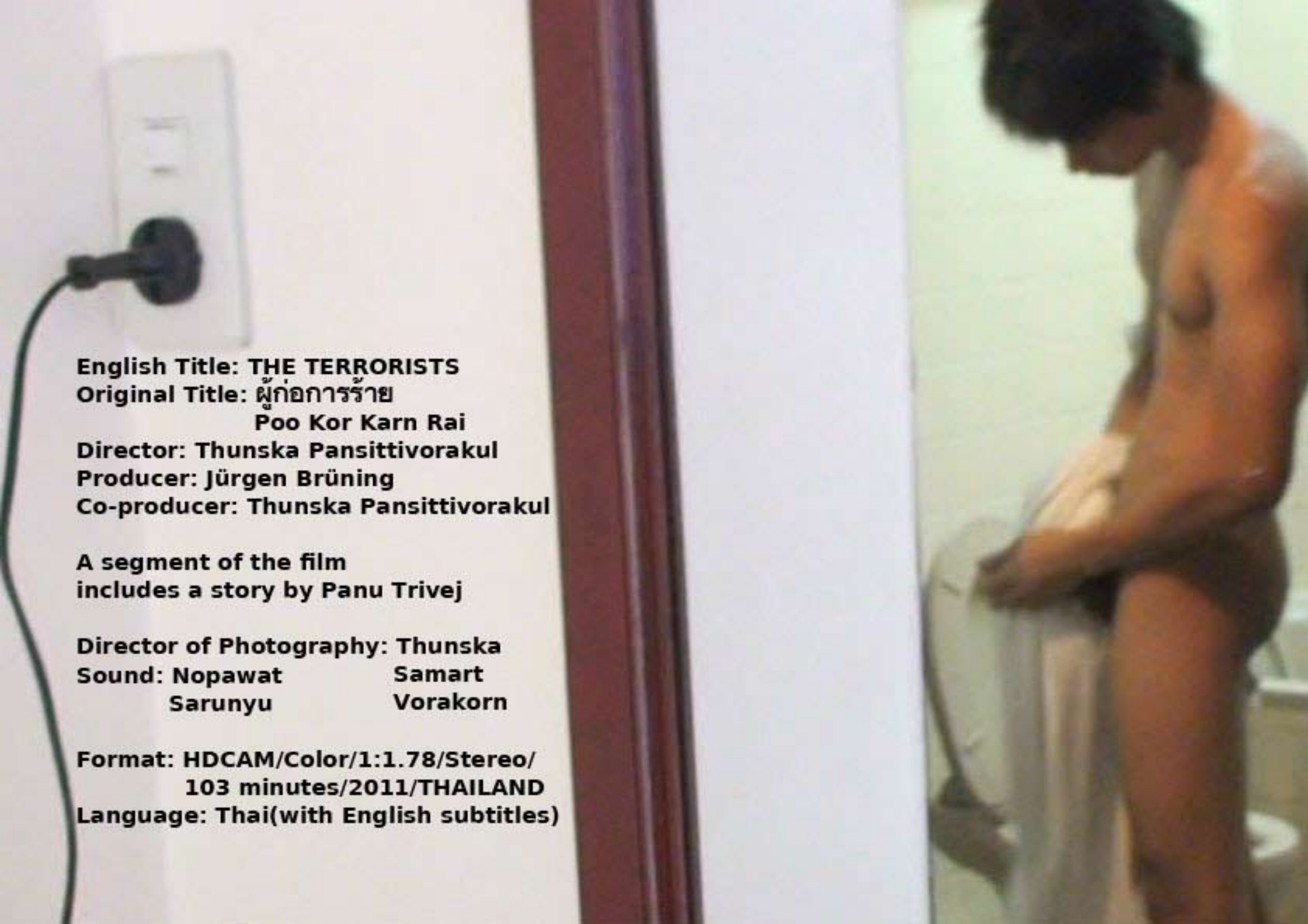


THE TERRORISTS
/POO KOR KARN RAI
a film by Thunskas Pansittivorakul
Jürgen Brüning Filmproduktion
presents
a For...Shiw Ping Production
www.thaiindie.com
<http://vimeo.com/16841528>

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English Title: THE TERRORISTS

Original Title: ผู้ก่อการร้าย

Poo Kor Karn Rai

Director: Thunska Pansittivorakul

Producer: Jürgen Brüning

Co-producer: Thunska Pansittivorakul

**A segment of the film
includes a story by Panu Trivej**

Director of Photography: Thunska

Sound: Nopawat

Samart

Sarunyu

Vorakorn

Format: HDCAM/Color/1:1.78/Stereo/

103 minutes/2011/THAILAND

Language: Thai(with English subtitles)

SYNOPSIS

The movie is divided into seventeen unrelated segments and is a mixture of both documentary and experimental film genres. By inhabiting the lives of laymen from different parts of Thailand, the movie brings us through blurry trails, distorted memories and recently constructed histories. We unearth missing pieces of the puzzle in our attempt to understand why Thai democracy is still considered backwards and frozen. Are we deceiving ourselves that we are in a democratic society when we are not?

The movie begins on a fishing boat, as we observe two boys conversing in an indecipherable tongue. It moves on to contemplate the light penetrating the sea and observe small lives swimming under the surface overlapped with a human body victimized by an unseen person. Beneath the darkness of a rubber farm, only faint light from the lamps illuminates the way. The truth from our present is superimposed with the blood-thirst from the past. The past is erased from the page of Thai history, and what is left is only the accusation that they are the terrorists.





DIRECTOR'S NOTE

There is a Thai saying: people's lives are different from fishes. You cannot fish, hunt, kill for fun, or cook people whenever we feel like it. We also have another saying: that we are a Buddhist country and that we use Buddhism to instruct ourselves why we should not kill – it is among the main five precepts of Buddhism. Yet those two sayings feel surreal and out of place since we are ready to strike whoever is accused, without concrete evidence, of tainting the nation, religion, and the king.

I have never been involved in politics until my movie, “This Area is under Quarantine”, was banned from being shown in a Thai film festival by the Ministry of Culture. The reason given for banning the film was that it was to preserve national security. It was then that I realized how frightening Thai politics could be, and how it has the power to control the way people absorb news and information. When the Bangkok massacre took place at the beginning of 2010, the media focused on entertainment and comedic news, instead of informing the country of what was really happening. It was as if the massacre was not real. The news program only depicted what the government wants the people to believe.

When the news of the massacre finally filtered into the country via external news agencies, the government reacted by shutting down websites, including blocking access to Youtube videos in an attempt to block the truth.

All these reminds me of my childhood and how important historical accounts were erased from textbooks, side lined, or misunderstood. People who have stood up to demand for a democracy are branded terrorists, while many actual terrorists have been praised, empowered and promoted to important political positions.

I will make it easier for you. I will tell you what you might not understand. We, the people of Thailand, are taught to love our King as our own father. Whenever someone demands for a democracy that we've never had, they will be accused of "not loving the father" – the King. This incites people, especially the middle-class, to demonstrate their loyalty to the King. Last year as the "Red shirts" were pushing for a general election, many middle-class citizens joined a Facebook group, Social Sanction, with an aptly named acronym, "SS". They went on a witch-hunt and listed publicly names, photos, details, home addresses and even phone numbers of those who supported the "Red shirts" and their political movement. The "SS" denounced individuals on Facebook, harassed them via phone calls, and even demanded for their bosses to fire these individuals. In some cases, individuals were even physically injured. This was all done in the name of the "father", the King. The government condoned the "SS' " behavior. They jailed individuals for insulting the King without proper trial, and many still remain locked up.

Of course, I am a Thai, and I am afraid of what might happen. The government is powerful enough to arrest or punish anyone who it deems as its enemy. This movie cannot tell the whole truth, but at least it tells more truth than what has previously been shown in any other Thai film.

THUNSKA PANSITTIVORAKUL





Thaksin Shinawatra was Prime Minister of Thailand from 17th February 2001 – 19th September 2006.
Abhisit Vejjajiva is Prime Minister of Thailand since 17th December 2008.

Yellow

People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) is a political group that was active in Thailand's political scene from 2005-2009. Its objective was to overthrow then Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra from his post, and to push Abhisit Vejjajiva to succeed him as Prime Minister. The movement of PAD resulted in the military coup d'état in 2006. Thailand was under a military government from 2006-2007. Subsequently, when a political party that pledge allegiance to Thaksin won the 2007 election, the PAD was re-established and conducted protests again in 2008. Their objective was to oust the Prime Minister at that time. The PAD accused its opposition of being disloyal to the monarchy. Eventually, the PAD managed to shut down Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport. As a result, the Prime Minister at that time accused of being Thaksin's proxy was ousted from power. Meanwhile, a high-ranking military official asked some Members of Parliament on Thaksin's side to defect to the opposition party, thus paving the way for the opposition party to form a government. Abhisit Vejjajiva was promoted to become Thailand's non-elected Prime Minister.

RED

National United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD)

was formed in 2007 to oppose the military government from the coup d'état in 2006. The UDD initially stopped its protest on 26th December 2007 after the political party on Thaksin's side won the general election and were allowed to form the government. The UDD was re-established to oppose the PAD.

After Abhisit Vejjajiva became Prime Minister, UDD went out to protest Abhisit's government since the protesters suspected that the military was responsible for the formation of Abhisit's government. Abhisit declared a state of emergency and ordered the troops to besiege the protesters until the protesters ended the protest on 14th April 2009.

One year later, on 8th April 2010, Abhisit again declared a state of emergency, shut down UDD's television broadcast channel, blocked websites that tried to report the truth, and forbade all television channels not to report news which painted the government in unfavorable light. On 10th April, the government sent the troops to dissolve the protest, which resulted in over 20 deaths and 850 injuries. On 3rd May, Abhisit proposed a reconciliation road-map but later retracted it. On 14th till 18th May, the government ordered the troops to besiege the protest area with tanks and snipers. As a result, 91 people were killed and more than 2,000 people were injured. The government extended the state of emergency for the subsequent 7 months. During that time, more than 50,000 websites were blocked. Some of the protesters were hunted down, jailed and murdered. All of the people responsible for the murders were anonymous and cannot be tracked down. Last year, the Thai army received 220,000 million baht (7.3 Billion USD) annual budget from the government, which is the most expensive military budget in Thai history.

Censorship in Thailand

Thailand's previous Films Act was enforced from 1930 till 2008.

In 2008, the military government that ousted Thaksin by coup d'état enacted the new Film and Video Act B.E. 2551.

They are seven film classification categories:

Promotion = Educational Films that should be promoted for viewing

General = Films suitable for general audience

Parental Guidance 13 = Films suitable for audience from age 13 and up

Parental Guidance 15 = Films suitable for audience from age 15 and up

Parental Guidance 18 = Films suitable for audience from age 18 and up

Restricted 20 = Films restricted for audience under age 20

Banned = Films prohibited from screening in the Kingdom of Thailand

'Promotion'

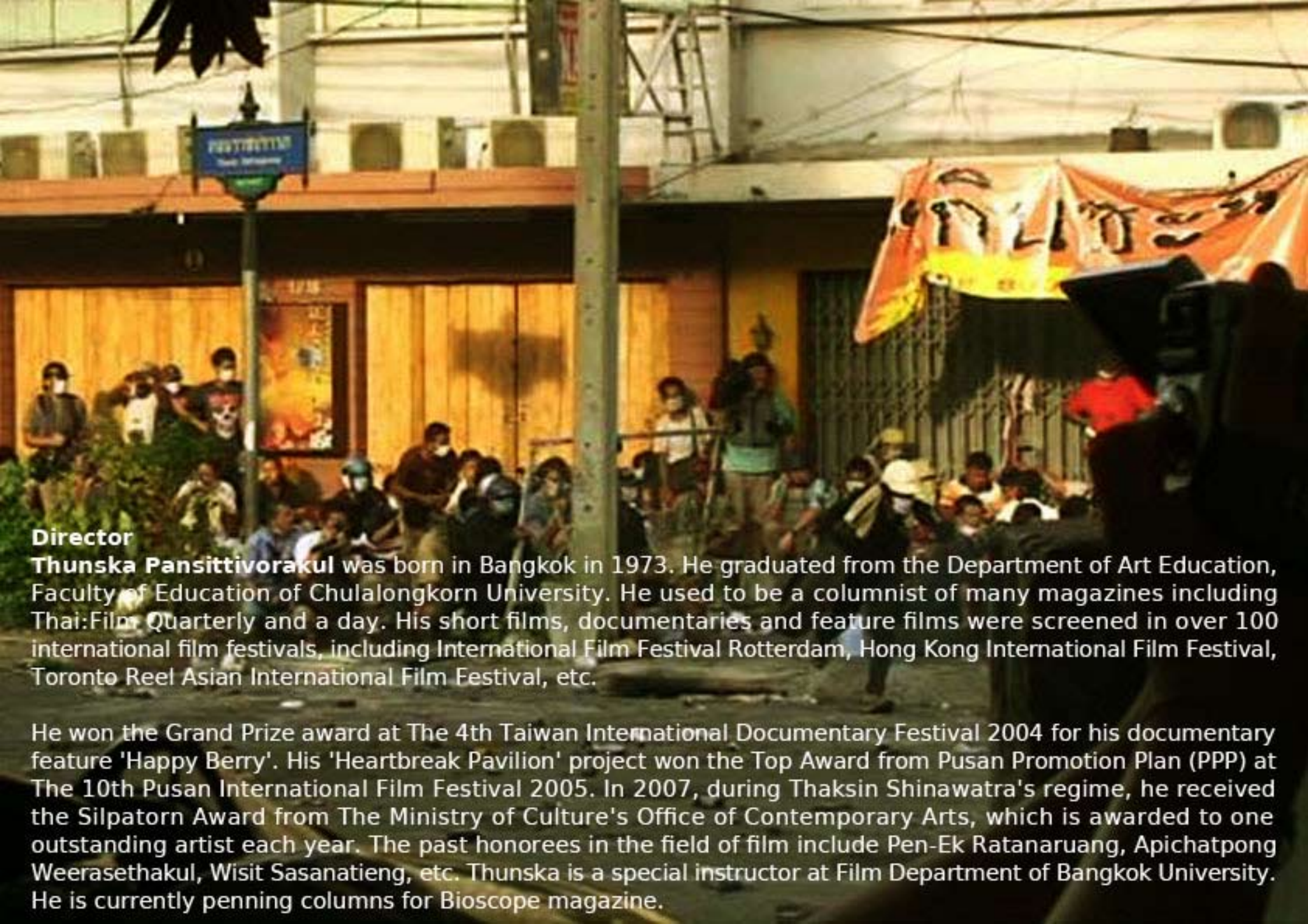
The films classified into **'Promotion'** category are films that are promoted by the government for viewing. Films in this category must;

- 1.** Contain themes that promote education, ethical conduct, culture, tradition and morality.
- 2** Contain themes that help in developing society, family, quality of life, natural resource and environmental protection.
- 3** Contain the themes that promote knowledge, understanding, responsibility and realization in a democratic government with the King as the Head of State.

'Banned'

The films that are classified into **'Banned'** category are films with the following content:

- 1.** Content that depicts sex scenes and / or sexual organs.
- 2.** Content that affects or insults the monarchy and the nation, and / or affects national security.
- 3.** Content that insults or damages religion, or show disrespect to the religious priest, place or object.
- 4.** Content that causes dissention among citizens and / or affects foreign diplomacy.
- 5.** Content that is against morality, culture and tradition of the nation.



Director

Thunskā Pansittivorakul was born in Bangkok in 1973. He graduated from the Department of Art Education, Faculty of Education of Chulalongkorn University. He used to be a columnist of many magazines including Thai:Film Quarterly and a day. His short films, documentaries and feature films were screened in over 100 international film festivals, including International Film Festival Rotterdam, Hong Kong International Film Festival, Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival, etc.

He won the Grand Prize award at The 4th Taiwan International Documentary Festival 2004 for his documentary feature 'Happy Berry'. His 'Heartbreak Pavilion' project won the Top Award from Pusan Promotion Plan (PPP) at The 10th Pusan International Film Festival 2005. In 2007, during Thaksin Shinawatra's regime, he received the Silpatorn Award from The Ministry of Culture's Office of Contemporary Arts, which is awarded to one outstanding artist each year. The past honorees in the field of film include Pen-Ek Ratanaruang, Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Wisit Sasanatieng, etc. Thunskā is a special instructor at Film Department of Bangkok University. He is currently penning columns for Bioscope magazine.

FEATURE FILMS:

2002 Voodoo Girls หัวใจต้องสวอป
2004 Happy Berry สวรรค์สุดเอื้อง
2008 This Area is under Quarantine
บริเวณนี้อยู่ภายใต้การกักกัน
2010 Reincarnate จูติ
2011 The Terrorists ผู้ก่อการร้าย

SELECTED SHORT FILMS

2000 Love Sickness รักเร่
2000 ...for Shiw-Ring 28/12/97
แต่เช้าปง 28 ธันวาคม 40
2001 Sigh เมืองร้าง
2003 Chemistry ปฏิกริยา
2004 Unseen Bangkok มหัตศจรรย์กรุงเทพ
2005 Vous vous souviens de moi?
ในวันที่ฝนตกลงมาเป็นคู่สคูส
2005 Life Show เปลือยชีวิต
2005 After Shock วันฟ้าสวย
2006 Out of Control เหนือการควบคุม
2006 You Are Where I Belong To ปลายทาง
2007 Middle-earth มัชฌิมโลก
2008 Soak ชุ่ม
2008 Action!





Jürgen Brüning Filmproduktion

was founded in 1987 and has produced more than a dozen features and documentaries.

Selected productions:

- 1987 Kinder der Konfettimaschine, R.Grams/K.Dörries, commissioned by ZDF/ German TV
- 1990 König der Eidechsen, Andreas Piontkowitz, commissioned by ZDF/ German TV
- 1990 No Skin off my Ass, Bruce LaBruce, London Filmfestival 1990
- 1993 Trouble, Penelope Buitenhuis, commissioned by ZDF/ German TV, Melbourne FF 1994
- 1994 Super 8 1/2, Bruce LaBruce, Toronto Filmfestival 1994
- 1994 Pfui – Unzucht und Ordnung in Deutschland, R.Grams/R.Anders/J.Brüning, Berlinale 1994
- 1996 Hustler White, Bruce LaBruce, Sundance Filmfestival und Berlinale 1996
- 1996 Tarch Trip, Oki Hiroyuki, Rotterdam Filmfestival 1997
- 1997 Latin Boys go to Hell, Ela Troyano, Berlinale 1997
- 1999 Skin Flick, Sundance, Toronto and Edinburgh Filmfestival 1999
- 2001 West fickt Ost, Jürgen Brüning, Mix Brazil Sao Paulo 2002
- 2003 Saudade, Jürgen Brüning, Lisboa Queer Filmfestival 2004
- 2004 The Raspberry Reich, Bruce LaBruce, Sundance, Berlinale und Toronto Filmfestival 2004
- 2008 Otto; or, up with Dead People, Bruce LaBruce, Sundance and Berlinale 2008
- 2009 Bandaged, Maria Beatty, Tel Aviv Queer Filmfestival 2009
- 2010 L.A. Zombie, Bruce LaBruce, Locarno Competition, Toronto 2010
- 2011 The Terrorists, Thunskä Pansittivorakul, Berlinale 2011
- 2011 Mommy is Coming, Cheryl Dunye, available March 2011



Thunskā Pansittivorakul
(director / co-producer)



Jürgen Brüning (producer)











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