

Like most websites, **The List** uses [cookies](#). If you browse the site we'll assume you're happy with this.



## Apichatpong Weerasethakul at GSFF: 'I encourage the organiser to bring some beds, and the audiences to bring pillows and sheets'

- [Scott Henderson](#)
- 30 January 2018



Weerasethakul (right) on set of Footprints



## **Palme d'Or winning director discusses her work, which will screen as part of an overnight film experience at Glasgow Short Film Festival**

It's a rare filmmaker who continues making short films having embarked on their feature film career. Rarer still is the director who wins the Palme d'Or and still can be found tinkering and experimenting with installations and obsolete cinematic technologies like Super 8. Like his Cannes-winning *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*, Apichatpong Weerasethakul's shorts are enigmatic, subtly humorous, meditative, often ethereal affairs – in fact it's hard to think of a better way to experience them than in an overnight marathon at Glasgow's CCA.

**As a short filmmaker you've been prolific throughout your career, working on features films hasn't changed that. What is it about shorts that keeps you coming back?**

Feature filmmaking takes a long time to make, short film is a great help in changing the inertia, the rhythm. Most of my short films are not big productions. Making them allows me to be more intimate with the camera and the subjects.

**You're shooting on everything from Super 8 to digital. How does the practical or artistic intersect in your camera choice?**

When you don't consider what you do work, you take pleasure in it as if you are a child, immersing yourself in it with full curiosity. Different camera 'eyes' excite me and stimulate the filmmaking because I think this craft always ties in with technology and invention, since when we were in caves and scratching images on the rocky surfaces.

**A number of art institutions like the Tate, have shown your shorts and they've described you as a 'filmmaker and media artist'. Do you see those titles as distinct?**

Like my long name, it's just a name. I don't think about them.

**What do you recall about your first short filmmaking experience?**

I was working on 16mm film. Afterwards, I spent more time in the darkroom than the shooting. I somehow enjoyed the calculations of frames, exposures. It's intimate and suits my character well. I remember the anticipation awaiting a roll of film from the lab, putting it on a projector, and making more calculated adjustments. This ritual is no more.



Weerasethakul discusses a shot with his actor on *M Hotel*(

**Short film communities are often diverse, experimental and DIY in nature. What is the short filmmaking scene or community like in Thailand and is that something you still engage with?**

I don't as much as I want to. We have a short film festival that people submit the works to, where you can find gems. When I curate a program, I ask for recommendations from the festival. What is interesting for me in Thailand now is the attempt to voice political views in these short films. In the open, we cannot do it under the military dictatorship.

**Are there short filmmakers in Thailand, or elsewhere whose work you especially admire?**

I like these talented filmmakers: Pathompon Tesprateep, he works on 16mm film, lyrical and political. Sompot Chidgasornpongse, my assistant who is like my twin, intellectually. He made a film called *Railway Sleepers*, which you can sleep in. Chulayarnnon Siriphol, he is attracted to cosmic manifestation, a fatalist, an artist. Taiki Sakpisit, a man of little compromise. He makes the two extreme kinds of films – very violent and fast ones, and ones that are very slow. Wichanon Somumjarn, he's from Khon Kaen, the same town I was from in the northeast. He has captured the life, the mundane of us so well. Sutthirat Supaparinya, she's what you mentioned before – a media artist. She lives in the north where I live now. Her films are contemplative, with social commentaries. She documents places that are changing, and places that refuse to change.

**How do you feel about your work being shown in non-traditional cinema spaces?**

I think we are in a transitional period, like when we moved from silent to talkies, black and

white to colour. The bridge is littered with subpar materials before we find solid ones to build a strong bridge. I think VR is the direction we want to cross towards. We try to eliminate the frame, to make cinema (or whatever you want to call it) closer to dream.

**At GSFF, your short films are being screened as part of an overnight performance – how does this experience fit your work?**

I encourage the organiser to bring some beds, and the audiences to bring pillows, sheets. I hope that at one point in the night, one doesn't need to interpret meanings but let the image and sound flow like a river. You cannot control it, just marvel. I also think the experience reminds me of when I was young and slept in the movies that my parents took me to see. The drifting, the youth, the comfort of this dark cave ...

*Glasgow Short Film Festival, various venues, Wed 14–Wed 28 Mar; Apichatpong Weerasethakul All-Nighter, CCA, Glasgow, Sat 17 Mar.*

## **Glasgow Short Film Festival**



Glasgow Short Film Festival is the largest competitive short film festival in Scotland and celebrates diverse forms of cinematic expression that transgress the boundaries of conventional narrative film. The programme includes international and Scottish competitions, networking events, panel discussions, workshops, parties...

### **Glasgow Film Theatre**

#### **Wed 14 Mar**

Times & prices vary / 0141 332 6535

#### **Thu 15 Mar**

Times & prices vary / 0141 332 6535

#### **Fri 16 Mar**

Times & prices vary / 0141 332 6535

**...and 2 more dates until 18 Mar**