

HAF 03 Deadline



COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Hong Kong

GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME: Drama, Suspense | Digital Format | Cantonese | 90 mins

DIRECTOR:

Kiwi CHOW

PRODUCER:

Jacqueline LIU

Kiwi CHOW

HAF GOALS:

Funds

BUDGET:

US\$ 1,300,000

SECURED BUDGET:

US\$ 650,000

DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY

2013 *A Complicated Story*

ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS

Seven students openly issue a suicide pact revealing what will happen; a scandal and a tragedy unravel instead. With education in Hong Kong in crisis, who is left to save?

SYNOPSIS

It is June. With public exams just around the corner, everyone from teachers to students to parents is all worked up. Pressure is now a ticking time bomb.

A public suicide pact surfaces at Graceful Secondary School, full of accusations that the exams are rigged and making a vow to commit mass suicide. The deadline? Exam day. Signed by “Seven students who wish to die”.

On high alert, school authorities scurry to stop the news from spreading in a race against time as they seek out the students involved. “Are they crying out for help? Or crying wolf?” the Principal asks, until the tragedies come, one after another. The unraveling truth becomes an unbelievably large educational scandal.

Seven students in total. Who can be saved? Can the tragedies be brought to an end? With education in Hong Kong at the brink, who can be saved?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

“Deadline” is a response to many issues faced by educators, including exam pressures, drug abuse, integrated learning, student suicides, commercialised education, the “grades above all” culture, and many other issues. This film looks for a way out of the quandary we now seem to be stuck in. Yet, more importantly, it looks at these issues in solidarity with students, from their perspective.

Student suicides have become a serious problem in Hong Kong. But people in Hong Kong can be blasé, especially when hysteria runs its course and nothing constructive emerges. A film with the stories of those afflicted with suicidal thoughts is more worthwhile if it pays respects to students at suicidal risk, telling them they are not alone.

“Deadline” is a cry for help, a cry for others to listen!

The school, the parents, the students... we hope to show in the film that no one is a cold-blooded antagonist, even if loved ones are often hurt in the very name of love. We are all co-conspirators, and indeed perpetrators, but victims all the same.

In what seems to be tragedy, the film is a search for hope. In what seems to be accusations comes expressions of compassion.

DIRECTOR

Kiwi CHOW

Kiwi Chow graduated from HKAPA with a Bachelor and a Master of Fine Arts, teaching for over a decade at his alma mater as Guest Lecturer. His shorts include *Grandma's Room*, *Upstairs*, *A Good Thin*, *Sensitive*, etc.

He directed his first feature film, Johnnie To and Bill Kong present *A Complicated Story* (2013), which was selected for the 37th Hong Kong International Film Festival before winning him the Award for Young Artist (Film) at Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2014. He directed segment "Self-immolator" of the film *Ten Years* (2015), which won Best Film in the 35th Hong Kong Film Awards.

PRODUCER

Jacqueline LIU

Liu has produced independent and commercial films including: *Leaving Sorrowfully* (2000); *Butterfly* (2004, Opening Film, International Critics' Week, 58th Venice Film Festival); *August Story* (2006, Best Film, Tainan Film Festival); *Plastic City* (2008, 65th Venice Film Festival); *Soundless Wind Chime* (2009, Teddy Award nominee, 59th Berlin Film Festival); *Wild City* (2015, premiered at the Taipei Film Festival); *K* (2015, 65th Berlin Film Festival); *Sky on Fire* (2016); *Sisterhood* (2016, Macao Audience Choice Award and Award for the Best New Young Actress at the International Film Festival and Awards Macao); and *In your Dreams* (2017, opening film, Hong Kong Asian Film Festival).

Kiwi CHOW (same as director)

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Photon Films (HK) Limited

Established 2016 in Hong Kong, Photon Films (HK) Limited is a partnership between director Kiwi Chow and screenwriter Felix Tsang. They co-created *Forget Me Knot*, a film that has been awarded the Film Development Fund for Film Production Grant out of 25 contenders, offering a 20% production subsidy. Chosen by a board comprising producers, directors and film scholars, the film's quality and its potential are unquestionable.

The company's latest film, *Deadline*, is now in pre-production.