

## WIP I Kith and Kin



**REGION:** Thailand

**GENRE | FORMAT | LANGUAGE | RUNNING TIME:**

Documentary | Digital Format | Thai | 90mins

**DIRECTOR:**

Waraluck HIRANSRETTAWAT

**PRODUCER:**

Pailin WEDEL

**HAF GOALS:**

Funds

**BUDGET:** US\$ 128,773

**SECURED BUDGET:** US\$ 36,000

**DIRECTOR'S FILMOGRAPHY**

2014 *Y/Our Music*

2011 *Good Deeds Ensemble*

**ONE-SENTENCE SYNOPSIS**

Set during Thailand's military dictatorship, this dark comedy/documentary follows how a Chinese-Thai family becomes deeply divided when members are told the grave of their ancestor needs to be relocated.

## SYNOPSIS

During their annual ancestor worship, three generations of the Koh family discover that the Fujian cemetery in Bangkok will be relocated. Their ancestor — Koh Bien Tiet — is buried there in a Chinese tomb. Right before the big family gathering, Koh Bien Tiet visits the eldest family member, Noi, in her dreams. Noi believes the dream is a sign he must be cremated to find peace. But Noi's niece, Moo, believes they must respect Koh Bien Tiet's wishes to be buried according to Chinese custom. Thus deep divisions in the family emerge, unfolding in the aftermath of Thailand's own political turmoil.

The family decides that they will have a vote on the decision. But bickering turns into feuds as family members form alliances and devise campaigns to sway others. Through this journey, the family grapples with their identity and their duty as Chinese-Thai five generations after their founding ancestor arrived from China.

Set against the backdrop of Thailand's military government's 2016 constitutional referendum, the film explores how one family tries to resolve their conflict while the country struggles with democracy itself.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Like most Thais, I was raised with hierarchical nationalism where the head of state is father of the kingdom. This meme is endlessly recycled in films, television dramas, textbooks, novels, and political campaigns. Meanwhile, cultural diversity is suppressed by centralised nationalism. Even so, my society still suffers from polarization. My mother spoke well of the hierarchical system, seeing it as the source of her own authority. She believed the younger generation should be excluded from family decisions. I need to tell the story of my family's conflict, and how they coped with the reburial of our first ancestor to be buried in Thailand, as an allegory for Thai society. *Kith and Kin* is that story — deeply serious — told with a light-hearted tone to capture the playfulness of contemporary Thai culture.

## DIRECTOR

### Waraluck HIRANSRETTAWAT

Hiransrettawat was born in Bangkok. She worked there in commercial film production and advertising, studied and worked in the UK for ten years, then returned to Bangkok to pursue documentary projects. She debuted as co-director and co-producer with *Y/Our Music* in 2014. Screened at 27 film festivals, including Busan International Film Festival and SXSW in Austin, the film was nominated for a Supanahong Award for Best Documentary.

## PRODUCER

### **Pailin WEDEL**

Wedel is a Thai-American filmmaker and journalist. She works on documentaries that focus on themes of faith, trauma and adaptation to modernity. Her first feature-length film as a director and producer, *Hope Frozen* (2018), screened at more than 20 film festivals and won Best International Feature Documentary at Hot Docs. She also regularly works on television and news documentaries with outlets including Al Jazeera English, The New York Times and National Geographic.

## PRODUCTION COMPANY

### **2050 Productions Co., Ltd.**

2050 Productions is a small documentary team based in Bangkok.

2050 primarily focuses on Southeast Asia. Our first feature film *Hope Frozen* won Best International Feature Documentary at Hot Docs in 2019, qualifying for the Oscars without the traditional theatre run.

Why our name? 2050 alludes to the year 2050, right in the centre of the unfolding Asian century. Human civilization's center of gravity is moving east. So we're here to tell Asian stories and decipher Asian issues. Our storytelling offers a glimpse at the world to come.