



ARCTIC FILM FESTIVAL

‘Fantasy of Companionship Between Human and Inanimate’ Review

Director Dr. Susan Lim and Dr. Christina Teenz Tan’s short film entitled ‘Fantasy of Companionship Between Human and Inanimate’ is a splendidly unique and imaginative example of animation, self-described as a ‘musical fantasy.’ The animated images prove spectacularly masterful in quality, and the colors used are consistently vibrant and engaging to boot, contributing to a piece that would appeal to audiences of all ages.

This is the story of a lion, in Tanzania, by the name of Alan who is tragically shot by a hunter. The lion’s soul finds drifting, until it winds up in an inanimate toy lion and is shipped to California, and the toy ends up in the hands of a young girl by the name of Christina, who eventually goes off to college with Alan. Through new technology, Alan’s genetic code is transferred in such a way that Alan is able to live forever and even continue to evolve in his abilities over time.

The accompanying musical composition, consisting of a variety of melodies played on the piano and orchestra (and towards the end insightful lyrics are also included) provides an accompaniment to the narration that meshes nicely with the tone of the thematic content at hand here, and further to this, helps to tell the story with the differences in the pacing and mood of the composition of the music itself - creating an animated ballad of sorts.

The animated human protagonist, Christina, and her companionship with 'Alan the inanimate' offers a bittersweet and endearing plotpoint, which tugs at the heartstrings. The notions of artificial intelligence and quantum entanglement, influenced by the director's highly unique background, make for a compelling and unusual story that brings up a number of ethical quandaries for the spectator to ponder, including the ethics of academia - which is an important topic that is covered here that remains an important avenue for exploration within this tale, which remains light-hearted on the surface but simultaneously raises these important and perplexing moral quandaries which humanity will surely encounter in the brave near-future.

What is also particularly interesting here is the animated portrayal of equations/ calculations and scientific instruments, which adds a fascinating, added layer of scientific-discovery to this fictional tale. One minor area for improvement lies in moments when the music seems to slightly overpower the voice of the spoken narration; it may be useful to reverse this dichotomy or at least rethink this strategy, as to ensure that the emphasis is consistently placed on the plot and narrative, rather than the music.

Furthermore, the creators' names appear fleetingly on screen towards the beginning of the film, but it would be beneficial to leave these visible for a longer period of time, in order for the spectator to take in this information, and to pay proper attribution to the time and effort that these producers put into this piece.

Overall, this short, animated, sci-fi/fantasy piece constitutes an enjoyable and fascinating watch, which

offers much food for thought regarding where new technology will take humanity in the future. One very nice and rather subtle touch in this piece is the reference to Van Gogh's painting of his bedroom - this animation offers an exceedingly lovely rendition of this beloved painting!