

2025 Global Outstanding Overseas Compatriot Alumni 【Sports and Culture Award】

Mr. Sam Quah

He is a new-generation director of Chinese-language suspense and crime films, and a rare creator whose works bridge both international film festivals and commercial markets. His films have screened around the world and even made it onto the Oscars shortlist. This Taipei National University of the Arts alumnus from Malaysia is redefining the depth and tension of Asian storytelling through the power of cinema.

Quah Boon-lip was born in Malaysia and has loved film and storytelling since childhood. He later enrolled in the MFA program in Filmmaking at Taipei National University of the Arts. During his studies, his talent quickly emerged: his realistic, nuanced style and socially conscious themes drew widespread attention. Upon returning to Malaysia, he dove into filmmaking and rapidly built an impressive body of work. Today, he stands as one of the most prominent overseas Chinese directors in the Chinese-language film industry. During his time at Taipei National University of the Arts, Quah was deeply inspired by Taiwan's diverse and open approach to film education. It was there that he began to develop his signature blend of documentary realism and suspense-driven narratives. The creative mindset and global perspective he cultivated during this period became a crucial foundation for his later success on the international stage.

Quah Boon-lip has made a strong mark in film and television since 2013, with a number of acclaimed short films and series:

Breakthrough in Short Films

- “The Free Man” (2014): Earned international recognition, winning Best Foreign Short Film at the Eugene International Film Festival and Best Directing for a Miniseries or Television Film at the 49th Golden Bell Awards. It was also shortlisted for Best Live Action Short Film at the 88th Academy Awards.

“A Place Called Silence” Series (2023–2024)

- The original short film “A Place Called Silence” won the Audience Choice Award at the 25th Taipei Film Awards and the Audience Award at the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival in South Korea.

- The expanded feature-length adaptation, “A Place Called Silence” (2024), received Best Director at the 12th New Zealand Asia Pacific Film Festival and swept Best Film, Best Director, and Best Screenplay at the Five Continents International Film Festival(澳洲五大洲國際電影節) in Australia.

Quah’s works blend commercial appeal with sharp social critique. Through a unique mix of suspense and realism, he explores psychological tension and societal issues - earning recognition from the Chinese-language film industry, academic circles, and international audiences alike. For him, filmmaking is not only an artistic endeavor but also a medium for conveying culture and values.

In recent years, Quah has been committed to advancing the international visibility of Asian storytelling. He continues to cultivate distinct cultural perspectives rooted in Asia, striving to create genre films with a uniquely Eastern lens. He also actively encourages young creators from Southeast Asia to step onto the global stage, hoping to turn his experience and Taiwan’s film education into a driving force for Southeast Asia’s cinematic growth.

Quah expresses deep gratitude for the inspiration and inclusiveness of Taiwan’s education system, as well as the cultural roots he inherited from Malaysia. Looking ahead, he hopes to keep telling stories through film - amplifying the voices of overseas Chinese generations and showcasing the power of Asian cinema to the world.