

Follow Your Passion

A Eulogy to Edward T. Yang

By Patrick Y. Yang

Edward Yang was so much more than the famous film director celebrated by many in Taiwan. To me, he was the special young man with a very lively heart, a zest for life, and a love of creativity.

It is hard to believe such a gifted, intellectual, vigorous man is suddenly gone.

Ed visited me in the Bay Area in March 2005 and promised to return in a year to shoot a cinema project involving a high tech Chinese-American struggling, but also thriving between two cultures. I hadn't seen Ed much since we left Hsinchu. Had I known that was to be our final time together, I would have spent more time with him, I would have paid more attention to everything

he said, and I certainly would have regarded our time together that bright sunny spring day in South San Francisco as very precious.

I showed Ed how we made genetically-engineered medicines using recombinant DNA in living host cells to fight cancer, among other diseases. I introduced him to several of my distinguished Asian Ameri-



▲2005年3月，射於Genentech公司，楊育民學長擔任Genentech副總裁

can colleagues. He was happy that he had a dose of what high tech felt like in California. He spent half a day at Genentech, the oldest biotech company in the world. Although he was already a household name in Taiwan then, he was still every bit the same curious, thoughtful, creative young man as when we were together in NCTU in the 1960s. He shared his ideas for the new film he was contemplating and the potential lead actor and actress. It was quite apparent that he was not a mass producer of films for entertainment, but a devoted artist crafting the details of his next masterpiece. Ed was special.

Although we were schoolmates, Ed and I actually didn't know each other very well until our junior year when we were both in the Naval ROTC training center in Southern Taiwan. We had been assigned to hours of guard duty one evening at the gate of the Naval Training School. We found that not only did we share the same last name, but also the same height, weight, and even nerdy looking eyeglasses. Later in 1969, we worked together on our yearbook. Over a dozen classmates contributed, but the energetic and dedicated Ed did most of the artwork. Along with Tom Wu, I was one of the photographers, and I got my first peek into Ed's amazing creative gift. From the mass of photo images he received, Ed was able to select and organize them into a succinct few pages that captured our youthful days in Chiao Da.

I remember another time I was impressed by Ed. This was when he articulated the inner vision he lived by. Ed and I jointly delivered a seminar at NCTU in 2001 on "Science and Humanity." The idea of this joint seminar came in 2000 when we got together during the New York Film Festival at the Lincoln Center in New York. I lived in New Jersey and worked for Merck then. Ed had just helped put the Taiwanese cinema on the global map by winning such big trophies as the Cannes best director for "Yi Yi." But Ed found time to share simple, yet profound, advice: "Follow your heart," he told the audience. Develop the courage to follow your passion." That was what Ed did in a spectacular way.

I don't know what more I can say about such an immense loss, not only to the industry he richly contributed to after leaving the electronics/computer field but also to us, who cherished him as a friend. There is a vacuum in me, still unable to digest the reality of his passing. There is an unspeakable anger in me as well, for cancer has once again beaten me by taking Ed mercilessly.

I will miss his expressing the very essence of the youthfulness, creativity and liveliness of our 1969 class at NCTU. Rest in peace, Ed. You will live on in our hearts.友聲



中譯如下：

追隨你的熱情——懷念楊德昌

文·電工58級 楊育民／譯·彭琍靜

楊德昌不只是台灣電影界最傑出導演之一。對我而言，他更是精力充沛，對生命充滿熱情、喜愛創造的青年才俊。

實在令人難以置信，這麼一位極具天份才華、充滿活力的青年才俊突然間就這麼消逝了！

2005年三月，德昌到灣區來看我，而且還說一年之內要拍一部新片以高科技為

背景，描述中美文化之間的掙扎與成長。其實，自從離開新竹後，我和他就很少碰面。如果我早知道 2005 年三月在舊金山那個清朗暖和的春日將成為我們最後的相聚，我會花更多的時間陪著他，我會更在意他說的每一句話，因為這一天是這麼地令人珍惜！

那一天，我帶德昌參觀我們的工廠，我向他說明 Genentech（編按：楊育民學長所屬公司）的生物工程技術，我們的技術是將活體細胞做基因重組來對付癌症，我還向他介紹許多傑出的亞裔同事。德昌說他很高興對加州高科技的生活有了進一步的體驗，Genentech 是全球歷史最悠久的生物科技公司，他幾乎花了大半天在這裡參觀。雖然他在台灣已是家喻戶曉的大人物，但他依舊是那麼好奇，那麼喜好探究事物，那麼富有創造力，就像 1960 年代我們一起在交通大學念書時所認識的他。德昌也和我分享他籌備中的影片，還提及一些具有潛力的男女主角。很明顯的，德昌不是屬於為商業目的而大量產出的那一型導演，他總是投注完全的心力雕琢他的藝術傑作。德昌就是這麼特別的人物！

雖然我們是同學，但在大學時期的初期我倆並不太熟，直到大三那一年，我們一起在南台灣的海軍專科學校預備軍官訓練中心受訓才熟稔起來，有一次我們在傍晚時分被分派到中心門口去站崗，一站就是好幾個小時。後來我們倆發現彼此有許多相似之處：我倆都姓楊，身高一樣，體重差不多，也都是四眼田雞。大四時（1969 年），我們一起編畢業紀念冊，幾乎有十來位同學一起協助編輯，不過，德昌負責所有的美術編輯，我和吳正堂負責攝影部分。這是我第一次見識到德昌的藝術天份，我們提供了他一大堆照片，他卻能夠細心篩選將之濃縮成幾頁紀念冊，精準地將我們在交大的青春歲月呈現出來。

還有一次，德昌也讓人印象深刻，他滔滔分享了他的內心世界。那一次是 2001 年，德昌和我聯袂到母校交大一起做了一個「科技和人文」的演講。興起一起演講的想法是 2000 年我們一同在林肯中心參加紐約影展所提起，那時候我住紐澤西，尚在默克藥廠工作；德昌剛以《一一》獲得坎城影展最佳導演獎，為台灣電影在國際上贏得一席之地。然而，德昌總是喜愛分享他一貫簡單又具深意的想法，記得在交大的演講，他對著所有的聽眾這麼說：「追隨你的熱情！鼓起勇氣追隨你的熱情！」這就是別具風格的德昌！

我實在難以用言語形容德昌的逝去是多麼大的損失，這不但是台灣電影界鉅大的損失，也是身為好友的損失。此刻，我內心空虛茫然，依舊無法相信他已逝去；此刻，我也有無法言喻的憤怒，癌症再次痛擊我它無情地帶走德昌。

我將永遠懷念交大 1969 級的楊德昌，和那個他以充滿創造力與活力與我們曾經共同奮鬥的年輕歲月。安息吧！德昌！你將永遠活在我們的心底！友聲