SOPHIA’S CHOICE
PROUDLY PRESENTS

ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA

SEASON 13
September 15 - October 12, 2021
Online • In Cinema • Drive-In

YOUR PASSPORT TO ASIAN CINEMA
Contemporary Films with English Subtitles

asianpopupcinema.org
Asian Pop-Up Cinema Season 13 is here!

Running between September 15 to October 12, 2021, Season 13 will continue with our hybrid format premiering 30+ films with half presented to a live audience indoors at AMC River East 21, Davis Theater, or other venues hosted by our cultural partners; or outdoors at ChiTown Drive-in in Pilsen; and with the balance streaming online.

Our Season 13 theme is: “What Makes Us One: Using Asian Cinema to Explore our Common Humanity.”

We have curated a mix of uncompromising, genre-bending films, including a thought provoking sidebar highlighting our common humanity, and six impressive dramas with diverse subject matter crafted by women directors. For fans of martial arts and action thrillers, for the first time, we have prepared a spectacular slate of martial arts/action films by legendary auteur King Hu accompanied by prominent and emerging filmmakers bringing fresh storylines and new breadth to this genre. The season’s official selection includes films from Canada, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, India, the Philippines and the US.

This season we are honoring one of the most versatile Hong Kong actors, Lam Ka Tung, who is also a producer and screenwriter, with a Career Achievement Award. We are featuring three of his most recent new works as a producer or the lead actor in the movies TIME, HANDROLLED CIGARETTE and LIMBO. Be sure not to miss any one of these films, and the Q&A video specially made for the festival.

Get your tickets early! See you online or at the theaters~~~

asianpopupcinema.org/13boxoffice

We want to assure you that PUBLIC SAFETY is our priority. Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC), will follow area mandates and meet or exceed CDC guidelines for all public events held indoors. Signage will be visible in each theater if a mask mandate is in place or if the theater is located where COVID transmission rates are high.

BE SAFE and STAY HEALTHY!

Sophia Wong Boccio
Founder & Executive Director
Sophia’s Choice Presents: Asian Pop-Up Cinema
We want to take this opportunity of thanking the following companies and individuals for their generous gifts and assistance in the planning and presentation of Season 13:

ADG Group, Alvin Tse, Asuka Kimura, Ben Munro, Bon Chan, Bronwyn Poole & Peter Schmitz, Bret Wood, Cecilee Dushkin, Cherrie Lau, Chris Huang, Clemence Taillandier, Colleen Duke, Emily & John Chen, Erika Kono, Felix Tsang, Gregory Picks, Harmony Ching, Heidi Liu, Inoue Wataru, Jane Yao, Jane @ ADG, Jason Lesniewicz, Jeff Trompeter, Jinx Park, John Bukacek, Jonathan Alvarez, Jonathan Hertzberg, Jose Perez, Julian Chiu, Julie Sung, Kanglan Chin, Katie Peabody, Kathy Susca, Katrina Tai, Kimo Chitown, Kristen Szabla, Lemon Lim, Liuying Cao, Mark Hallett, Mami Furukawa, Melissa Ng, Michael C. Boccio, Michelle Son, Pearl Chan, Qi Wang, Quin Lau, RayJay Lee, Robert Lundberg, Shinji Sakoda, Stephen Toyoda, Tarek Shoukri, Thavary Krouch, Tom Sveen, Van Choy, Yael Chouraqui and Yuki Koutari.

We acknowledge with thanks a matching gift from Yael Chouraqui and Yuki Koutari.

THANK YOU

Asian cultures through cinema.

Masuda Funai supports Sophia’s Choice and its commitment to fostering an understanding of Asian cultures through cinema.

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LAM KA TUNG
(林家棟)
Currently one of the most versatile actors in Hong Kong cinema, Lam Ka Tung was already a household name since he starred in over 60 TV series. He soon caught the eye of director Andrew Lau who cast him in TIME OF A DREAM (2001) and INFERNAL AFFAIRS I & II (2002, 2003). In 2004, Lam starred in Johnnie To’s YESTERDAY ONCE MORE (2004), which marked the beginning of their long-standing collaboration, followed by ELECTION I & II (2005, 2006), EXILED (2006), MAD DETECTIVE (2007), TRIANGLE (2007), SPARROW (2008), and VENGEANCE (2009). His notable credits include IP MAN (2008), COLD WAR (2012), FIRESTORM (2013), and TRIVISA (2016), for which he received the Best Actor Award at the Hong Kong Film Award.

We are proud to celebrate Lam’s remarkable career by featuring two of his most recent new works as lead actor: HAND ROLLED CIGARETTE and LIMBO plus another film, TIME, that he produced. See them all and enjoy the special Q&A video streaming FREE during the festival.
ASCENSION is an impressionistic portrait of China’s industrial supply chain that reveals the country’s growing class divide through staggering observations of labor, consumerism, and wealth. The documentary portrays capitalism in China across all levels of its operations, from the crudest mine to the most rarefied forms of leisure. Accordingly, the film is structured in three parts, ascending through the levels of the capitalist structure: workers running factory production, the middle-class selling to aspirational consumers, and the elites reveling in a new level of hedonistic enjoyment. In traveling up the rungs of China’s social ladder, we see how each level supports and makes possible the next while recognizing the contemporary “Chinese Dream” remains an elusive fantasy for most.

“Presented with no narrative and limited structure, ASCENSION is a collection of breathtaking images and revelatory vignettes that position China as a simultaneously alien and completely universal cultural and industrial landscape, never spelling out which direction points toward progress.”
- The Hollywood Reporter

“Never appearing to judge any situation, Kingdon confidently allows the images to tell a fascinating, universal story of inequality and class division, revealing a country that feels more like a capitalist society than anyone’s idea of a Communist state.”
- Screendaily
Now more than ever we need to talk to each other, to listen to each other and understand how we see the world, and cinema is the best medium for doing this.”

—Martin Scorcese

Illinois Tech Salutes Asian Pop-Up Cinema in Season 13!

Illinois Tech welcomes you to join our community of people who discover, create, and solve. Apply today, visit us in Chicago, and contact us for more information at iit.edu.

It is a fundamental part of Asian Pop-Up Cinema’s mission that we present Asian films that speak to the essential human aspects that are shared by people everywhere. To view a film by, say, Taiwan’s Hou Hsiao-Hsien or South Korea’s Bong Joon Ho is to uncover and recognize our universal human experience under a surface of specific cultural details.

Specially curated to highlight this season’s theme, “What Makes Us One: Using Asian Cinema to Explore Our Common Humanity,” the selected films explore the various ways in which one culture identifies its connections with others.

China’s ANIMA that deals with a young man forced to commit a taboo act in order to save his brother is the dilemma may be sparked by a prohibition not shared by other cultures, but nonetheless presents a common moral dilemma: Do I protect my loved one, or do I follow the dictates of a custom around which my society is built?

Canada’s WUHAN WUHAN is an extraordinary, timely and vital “fly on the wall” documentary, creating a pattern that exposes the ways that we as people share certain commonalities: loyalty, compassion, filial bonds, and the extraordinary need for community.

Japan’s WWII-set GIFT OF FIRE, based on a true story of a young researcher’s internal battles as he helps develop Japan’s atomic bomb. The questions of personal responsibility versus responsibilities to the state have a familiar ring to anyone who has been sensitive to the changes in our own society.

China’s SWIMMING OUT TILL THE SEA TURNS BLUE directed by internationally known director Jia Zhang-ke is a vital document of Chinese society since 1949. Like GIFT OF FIRE, this film explores the constantly conflicting demands of person versus state.

South Korea’s GULL tells the story of a 60-year-old’s sexual assault, a moving drama about women in a male-dominated society. At its core, this is about what happens when assault by an individual is exponentially compounded by a community determined to turn a blind eye for the sake of maintaining the veneer of complacency.

With this special segment, Asian Pop-Up Cinema aims to provide a platform for these voices so that they can be heard and, most important, shared. We believe that this is both a worthy goal and a sacred responsibility as the world makes its halting steps to come out from under the blanket of Covid-19.

Ron Falzone is an award-winning screenwriter and associate professor in Cinema and Television Arts at Columbia College Chicago and an instructor at the Second City Film School. His films have screened at major festivals worldwide including Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Montreal, and Cannes.

FIVE FILMS, FIVE HUMAN TALES is supported in part by the Illinois Humanities, the Illinois affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.
GIFT OF FIRE
(太陽の子)
U.S. PREMIERE

Thursday, September 16, 7:00PM @ AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)

Japan | Drama/History | 2020 | 111 minutes
In Japanese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Kurosaki Hiroshi
STARRING: Yuya Yagira, Kasumi Arimura, Haruma Miura
FILM SOURCE: Eleven Arts, USA

Best-known for his contributions to the public broadcasting outlet NHK, for which his script of the acclaimed drama Hiyokko received a Sundance Institute/NHK Award honorable mention, writer director Hiroshi Kurosaki was so taken by the discovery of the diary of a real-life atomic scientist yearning to find purpose. This inspired Kurosaki to create GIFT OF FIRE, the story of Japan’s attempts to make its own atomic bomb towards the end of World War II. Kurosaki brings to life a young man (played by Yasu Yagira, winner of the Cannes Film Festival Best Actor prize for his role in Hirokazu Kore-eda’s NOBODY KNOWS) and his passion for nuclear physics, an area of study that was very much in its infancy at the time. As World War II raged on, the physicist waged his own internal battles, including self-criticism for not serving in Japan’s military as well as his dreams of exploring new frontiers in science. Meanwhile he was faced with the reality that the manifestations of his work could create something lethal as he witnesses first-hand the resulting death and destruction of his country and its people.

ANIMA
(莫尔道嘎)

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Tuesday, September 21, 7:00 PM at Davis Theater (4614 N. Lincoln Ave)

China | Environmental/Drama | 2021 | 120 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Cao Jinling
STARRING: Wang Chuanjun, Qi Xi, Si Li Geng
FILM SOURCE: Fortissimo Films

With its title coming from shamanism, ANIMA is a timely meditation on Mother Earth and its intrinsic link with man. It marks the exceptional directorial debut of Cao Jinling, screenwriter of such films as CRYING OUT IN LOVE and MEET MISS ANXIETY. This genuine cautionary tale is told from Cao’s heart as she returns to her homeland, the mountains of Inner Mongolia, to give us a sensually immersive drama shot under harsh and risky conditions.

Protagonists Tutu and Linzi find themselves outsiders in their community after Tutu kills a bear—considered a sacred creature by fellow Lonki tribe members—in order to protect Linzi. As the brothers grow up, they’re desperate to make ends meet, working as loggers in the very woods of their youth. A wedge comes between them as Linzi forms a deep connection with nature, becoming a protector in his own right to ensure the century-old native trees remain unharmed, while Tutu, numbed by the bear incident, is indifferent. The divide is further deepened as they both fall for Chun, with Linzi and her raising a family together. With the excessive deforestation that Cao witnessed while growing up in the 1980s and 1990s, ANIMA affirms that humanity is severely out of balance with nature as economic progress and prosperity collide with the push to conserve the environment and consume sustainably.
ESCAPE FROM MOGADISHU
(모가디슈)

Wednesday, September 22, 7:00PM @ AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)
South Korea | Action/War/Thriller | 121 minutes
In Korean w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Ryoo Seung-wan
STARRING: Kim Yoon-seok, Huh-Joon-ho, Zo In-sung, Koo Kyo-hwan
FILM SOURCE: Well Go USA

This drama is based on a true story: as civil war rages in Mogadishu, rival North and South Korean diplomats are left trapped. With no aid from either government, their only shot at survival may require uniting with bitter adversaries to escape.

Energetically directed by Ryoo Seung-wan and very well performed, MOGADISHU has stormed to the top spot at the Korean box-office with more than a million tickets sold in the week since its July 28 release. The film’s outlook is promising as it opened at selected theaters in North America on August 6.

“Propelled by a naturally cinematic true story, the thriller blends action with humor and heart to crowd-pleasing effect.”
- Variety

THREE
(ТРИ)

N. AMERICAN PREMIERE

Thursday, September 23, 7:00PM @ AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)
Kazakhstan/South Korea/ Uzbekistan | Crime/Drama/History | 2020
112 minutes
In Kazakh and Russian w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Pak Ruslan
STARRING: Askar Iliasov, Igor Savochkin, Samal Yeslyamova, Nurzhan Sadybekov
FILM SOURCE: M-Line Films Distribution

Born in 1981 communist Russia, director/producer/editor Ruslan Pak is best known for HANAAN. His gristy thriller THREE won the New Currents Award at the 2020 Busan International Film Festival. This harrowing feature is based on the true story of Kazakh serial killer and cannibal Nikolai “Metal Fang” Dzhumagaliev, who murdered, mutilated, and devoured seven young women in 1979 and 1980, with his ultimate goal of completely eliminating females from earth. Set in dismal Soviet Kazakhstan, we find Sher Sadikhov accepting an internship with the government and being immediately thrown into the fire as he and a team of investigators trail Alik Korazhanov. While the scenes of the crude crimes are confined to a remote area of the Soviet Union, there is the ever-present corrupt and communist bureaucracy wielding its influence from faraway Moscow. With growing concern that Korazhanov’s odd string of murders, the most gruesome in Russian history, have the potential to gain international attention as the country is set to host the Olympics in 1980, government leadership attempts to downplay the incidents. And, as Sher learns that the killer has Sher’s older sister in mind as his next victim, it’s also apparent that both men have overbearing older sisters who will go to extremes to protect their younger brothers.

“Propelled by a naturally cinematic true story, the thriller casts partisan politics aside and celebrates what can be achieved when adversaries come together.”
- Variety
GO BACK
(고백)

Friday, September 24, 11:00AM @ Korean Culture Center of Chicago
(9930 Capital Drive, Wheeling, IL)

FREE/RSVP IS REQUIRED.
South Korea | Drama/Crime | 2020 | 99 minutes
In Korean w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Seo Eun-young
STARRING: Park Ha-sun, Ha Yoon-kyung, Gam So-hyun, Seo-Young-hwa
FILM SOURCE: Little Pictures

Director Seo Eun-young’s multiple award-winning, heart wrenching crime-drama GO BACK looks at the perpetual vicious cycle of dysfunction found in families that is passed from generation to generation. Jiwon, a driven and newly hired policewoman, crosses paths with Osun, a social worker, who feels a strong connection with abused children and advocates on their behalf. Jiwon, who experienced bullying during her childhood, senses something off about Osun, who was also abused in her youth. As one of Osun’s clients is in a state of distress and later kidnapped, Osun is left powerless and panicked as she feels compassion towards the affected girl. As the captor demands a large ransom from citizens in exchange for the young girl’s release, the incident balloons into a national news story. Suspicions mount as the odd bank account tied to the deal is linked to a welfare center while Jiwon begins to wonder if there’s a connection between Osun and the missing child.

SWIMMING OUT TILL THE SEA TURNS BLUE
(一直游到海水变蓝)

Saturday, September 25, 2:00 PM @ Tower Auditorium
@ Illinois Institute of Technology - IIT (10 W 35th St, Chicago)

CHICAGO PREMIERE
FREE/RSVP IS REQUIRED.
China | Documentary | 2020 | 111 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Jia Zhang-ke
STARRING: Hua Yu, Pingwa Jia, Liang Hong, Huifang Duan, Yu Hua
FILM SOURCE: Cinema Guild

From master director Jia Zhang-ke (ASH IS THE PUREST WHITE, A TOUCH OF SIN) comes a vital documentary of post-1949 Chinese society. Jia interviews three prominent authors—Jia Pingwa, Yu Hua, and Liang Hong—born in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, respectively, and all from the same Shanxi province where Jia also grew up. In their stories, we hear of the dire circumstances they faced in their rural villages and small towns, and the substantial political effort undertaken to address them, from the social revolution of the 1950s through the unrest of the late 1980s. In their faces, we see volumes left unsaid. Jia weaves it all together with his usual brilliance. SWIMMING OUT TILL THE SEA TURNS BLUE is an indispensable account of a changing China from one of the country’s foremost cinematic storytellers.
The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York continues its mission to foster closer economic and cultural ties and promote mutual understanding between Hong Kong and the 31 eastern states of the USA.

For more information, check out our website (www.hketony.gov.hk) or follow us on Facebook and Instagram "Hong Kong Meets America".
THE DISHWASHER SQUAD  
World Premiere  
directed by Shum Shek-Yin  
Mon, 9/27 at sunset  
@ ChiTown Drive-in

JUST 1 DAY  
U.S. Premiere  
directed by Erica Li  
Screening Wed, 9/29 at sunset  
@ ChiTown Drive-in

TIME  
directed by Ricky Ko  
Premiering Tues, 10/5 at sunset  
@ ChiTown Drive-in

HAND ROLLED CIGARETTE  
directed by Chan Kin Long  
Premiering Wed, 10/6 at sunset  
@ ChiTown Drive-in

DRIFTING  
directed by Jun Li  
Streaming, 9/15 - 9/21  
geo-blocked for Midwest views
THE DISHWASHER SQUAD
(洗碗天團)
WORLD PREMIERE
Monday, September 27, at sunset @ ChiTown Drive-in (2343 S. Throop)
HONG KONG | 2021 | Comedy | 100 minutes
In Cantonese w/Chinese & English subtitles
DIRECTOR: Shum Shek Yin
STARRING: Ekin Cheng, Richie Jen and Hedwig Tam
FILM SOURCE: Dreams Salon Entertainment Culture Investment Limited; The Film Development Fund of Hong Kong and Create Hong Kong.

Chan Shi Kyun (Richie Jen) and Yu Chi Lun (Ekin Cheng) have been long time good friends. They recklessly bought a dishwashing factory on the cheap but discover that the business is in a financial ruin and has no employees while existing contracts must be honored at the risk of financial penalty. To solve their problem, they decided to hire through a social worker so they’ll be eligible “special social enterprise” subsidy fund in this crowd-pleasing comedy. (windowsonworld.com)

***This film is part of the Hong Kong New Talents touring program***
**JUST 1 DAY**
(給我1天)

**U.S. PREMIERE**
Wednesday, September 29, at sunset @ ChiTown Drive-In (2343 S. Throop)

Hong Kong | Drama/Romance | 2021 | 98 minutes
In Cantonese w/Chinese & English subtitles

**DIRECTOR:** Erica Li

**STARRING:** Charlene Choi, Wong Cho Lam, Kenny Wong, Kathy Yuen

**FILM SOURCE:** Emperor Motion Pictures

It will be hard to hold back the tears when watching the sweet, sappy **JUST 1 DAY**, marking the directorial debut of noted screenwriter Erica Li (THE LEGEND IS BORN, IP MAN, KING OF COMEDY), helming her own adaptation of the romance novel she’s authored. We find Angelfish—in a dead end relationship with her boyfriend who has another woman on the side—reconnecting with Mosaic, an illustrator who has been keen on Angelfish since their elementary school days. Saddled with the terminal Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) AKA Lou Gehrig’s Disease, Mosaic faces down his fears and asks Angelfish to pretend to be his girlfriend—just for one day. Mosaic plans a detailed itinerary as the childhood friends pass their time together reminiscing and fulfills Angelfish’s romantic dream of watching the sun rise over Hong Kong harbor with someone who loves her. It takes Angelfish some time but it dawns on her that she, too, loves Mosaic but, by then, his condition has deteriorated so drastically that he is required to have a caregiver.

***This film is part of the Hong Kong New Talents touring program***

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**DRAGON INN**
(龍門客棧)

**Tuesday, September 28, at sunset @ ChiTown Drive-in (2343 S. Throop)**

This film is also streaming. Check Page 41 for availability.

Taiwan | Martial Arts Restored Classics | 1967 | 111 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

**DIRECTOR:** King Hu

**STARRING:** Ling-feng Shang-guan, Chun Shih, Ying Bai, Chien Tsao

**FILM SOURCE:** TFAI, Taiwan

In mid-Ming Dynasty, the loyal and upright Minister of Defense, Yu Qian, has been executed by the emperor’s chief eunuch, Cao Shao-lin, a formidable martial arts master. Yu’s children have been sentenced to exile, but as they travel toward the empire’s western border, Cao dispatches two of his top agents from the Eastern Depot to assassinate them. Having reached Dragon Inn, located in the desolate lands near the border, the agents and their henchmen prepare an ambush....

**DRAGON INN** broke box office records and became a phenomenal hit and cult classic, especially in Southeast Asia. This tense tale of highly skilled martial artists hidden in an inn was said to be the inspiration for Ang Lee’s CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON (2000) and Zhang Yimou’s HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS (2004). In 2003, the award-winning Malaysian-born Taiwanese auteur Tsai Ming-liang made GOODBYE, DRAGON INN, a tribute to Hu, in which all the action takes place during a closing cinema’s last show of DRAGON INN.” - from Wikipedia.org
THE FABLE: THE KILLER WHO
doesn’t kill
(ファブル 殺さない殺し屋)

MIDWEST PREMIERE
Thursday, September 30, 7:00PM @AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)

Japan | Action/Comedy | 2021 | 123 minutes
In Japanese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Kan Eguchi
STARRING: Junichi Okada, Fumino Kimura, Yurina Hirate, Masanobu Ando, Shinichi Tsutsumi
FILM SOURCE: Film Business/Nippon Television Network

Chock full of action and absurdity, THE FABLE: THE KILLER WHO DOESN’T KILL is Kan Eguchi’s followup to THE FABLE and a pop culture treat based on the Manga series of the same name by Katsuhisa Minami. Meanwhile, the only person not to fall victim to Akira’s past assassinations is Utsubo, who’s leading a double life. His public image is one of a non-profit executive focused on the safety of children and a trusted face in the community. In another sphere, he collaborates with hitman Suzuki whose purpose is to extort and kill. This sequel is not to be missed as it’s filled with plenty of tension and artfully choreographed scenes, guaranteed to keep the viewer in suspense throughout.

ALSO, you don’t have to see the original THE FABLE to see this sequel.
TIME (殺出個黃昏)

DIRECTOR: Ricky Ko
STARRING: Patrick Tse, Petrina Fung, Lam Suet
FILM SOURCE: Edko Films, HK

Director Ricky Ko’s first feature TIME is an ultra-dark comedy at its onset but transitions into a heartwarming drama that looks at aging and its accompanying loneliness as well as friendship and family relations. Popular 1960s Hong Kong actor Patrick Tse Yin stars as an octogenarian hitman, Chau, who was part of a population that first arrived in the city in the 1950s and 1960s. He’s let go from his restaurant job as a noodle-cutter and replaced by technology—a noodle-cutting machine! Tse is convinced he’s headed for boredom and a solitary existence until he’s reunited with Mrs. Fung (fellow veteran actor Petrina Fung Bo Bo) and their former driver, Chung (Lam Suet), as they join forces to be part of a group called the Elderly Angels, helping relieve their contemporaries of misery by carrying out assisted suicides. These longtime actors share the screen with a far younger group of performers as they navigate relationships that come with ease, such as Chau’s encounters with a troubled teen, which evolves into a grandfather-granddaughter bond, while Mrs. Fung struggles to enjoy being around her son, daughter-in-law, and grandson, driving home the fact that some connect better with their chosen family over their biological one.

***This film is part of the Hong Kong New Talents touring program***

HAND ROLLED CIGARETTE (手捲煙)

DIRECTOR: Chan Kin Long
STARRING: Ka Tung Lam, Bipin Karma, Siu-Ho Chin
FILM SOURCE: Edko Films, HK

Nominated for seven 2020 Golden Horse Awards, including Best Picture, this neo-noir crime drama by first-time director Chan Kin-long (an actor who appeared in Fruit Chan’s THE MIDNIGHT AFTER) looks at a man’s struggle to find camaraderie and make ends meet after serving in the military. We find Kwan Chiu (played by veteran actor Gordon Lam Ka-Tung) in 1997-era Hong Kong, again under the rule of China, struggling to navigate civilian life where a support system is not readily available. He enters into the criminal underbelly of Hong Kong to be aligned with triad leader Big Mouth Tai to engage in shady business dealings to keep himself afloat financially. Director Chan employed the expert, aesthetic eye of cinematographer Rick Lau to richly convey the gritty edge of the city’s underworld as we witness the protagonist navigating his own uneasiness, filled with guilt and self-loathing. Kwan takes in petty crook Mani (Bipin Karma), considered by society to be lower class due to his dark skin tone. With Kwan saddled with debt, Mani gives him his drug stash to pay it off. In exchange, Kwan gives Mani a pack of hand-rolled cigarettes, a gesture symbolic of friendship, as the two men rise above their racial and cultural differences, deepening their loyalty toward one another and, for Kwan, finding brotherhood once more.

***This film is part of the Hong Kong New Talents touring program***
YOU ARE NOT NORMAL, EITHER
(まともじゃないのは君)

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE
Thursday, October 7, 7:00PM @ AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)
Japan | Comedy/Romance | 2021 | 98 minutes
In Japanese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Koji Maeda
STARRING: Ryo Narita, Kaya Kiyohara, Tsukika Akasaki
FILM SOURCE: Hakuhodo DY music & pictures Inc.

In this heartwarming comedy, we find introvert Ohno, a nerdy, timid test-prep tutor who can’t even sustain a conversation. While Ohno passes with flying colors in prepping his students to cram for exams, he continues to fail miserably when it comes to dating. Enter Kasumi, a teenager who assesses the awkward Ohno as not normal and sets about schooling the teacher as she claims to know the ropes when it comes to dating and love. Thanks to her vast research based on her own first-hand knowledge and experience when it comes to romance, she schemes with Ohno to apply her findings to land Ohno as Minako’s beau. As he’s courting Minako, Kasumi has aspirations of her own as she’s eyeing Minako’s fiancé as her personal passion project.

WUHAN WUHAN
(武汉武汉)

FREE/RSVP IS REQUIRED
Saturday, October 9, 2:00PM @ Chinese American Museum (238 W. 23rd Street)
Streaming Wednesday, October 6 – Tuesday, October 12
Canada/China | 2021 | Documentary | 90 minutes
In Wuhan dialect & Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Yung Chang
FILM SOURCE: The Film Collaborative

WUHAN WUHAN is an observational documentary unfolding during February and March 2020 at the height of the pandemic in Wuhan city, where the coronavirus began. With unprecedented access at the peak of the pandemic lockdown, WUHAN WUHAN goes beyond the statistics and salacious headlines and shares the human experience in the early days of the mysterious virus as Chinese citizens and frontline healthcare workers grappled with an invisible, deadly killer.

The film focuses on five heart-wrenching and endearing stories: a soft-hearted ER doctor and an unflappable ICU nurse from the COVID-19 hospital; a compassionate volunteer psychologist at a temporary hospital; a tenacious mother and son who are COVID-19 patients navigating the byzantine healthcare system; and a volunteer driver for medical workers and his nine-month pregnant wife whose heartfelt story forms the backbone of this film. At a time when the world needs greater cross-cultural understanding, WUHAN WUHAN is an invaluable depiction of a metropolis joining together to overcome a crisis..
Shot in black and white, Soi Cheang’s jarring, noirish police thriller LIMBO conveys the gritty and raw chaos of Hong Kong’s underworld. In the wake of public outcry to apprehend a serial killer, we find veteran detective Cham (Gordon Lam Ka-Tung) reactivated to duty and joining forces with rookie cop Will (Mason Lee). Cham’s traumatic past hangs over him as he crosses paths with To (Cya Liu), the girl who killed his wife and children in an accident. As payback, To helps Cham with the investigation but he struggles due to his loathing for the woman who destroyed his life and loved ones. To add fuel to the fire, the naïve Will and the volatile Cham butt heads over their differences when it comes to solving cases. Having screened films in competition at such prestigious film festivals as Venice (ACCIDENT) and Locarno (MOTORWAY) and in the Midnight Madness section of the Toronto International Film Festival (SPL2: A TIME FOR CONSEQUENCES), Soi’s films have grossed over $440 million in the United States alone, taking his work far beyond the confines of Hong Kong.
WHERE IS PINKI?

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Streaming Wednesday September 15 - Tuesday, September 21

India | Drama/Thriller | 2020 | 107 minutes

In Kannada w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Prithvi Konanur

STARRING: Akshatha Pandavapura, Gunjalamma, Deepak Subramanya

FILM SOURCE: Picture Tree Films

The third feature by Prithvi Konanur (WAVES, RAILWAY CHILDREN), a former software engineer, is the urban thriller WHERE IS PINKI? Using a cast comprised mostly of untrained actors recruited from the slums of Bangalore, this gritty, authentic, and human story examines 21st-century India and such institutions and issues as marriage, class, spirituality, the police, child protection, and the exploitation of youth. WHERE IS PINKI? concerns middle class couple Bindu and Girish whose eight-month-old daughter Pinki is cared for by nanny Sannamma. The caregiver hands over the baby to her friend Anasu to use as a prop for begging on the streets. Anasu tucks away Pinki in an underpass to search for alcohol and in her absence, street sweeper Pathu discovers the baby and takes her home. Meanwhile, Bindu returns to her apartment to find it in shambles and to her dismay, she discovers that Pinki and Sannamma are gone, leading to a frenzied search—enhanced with the use of a handheld camera—all over the city and surrounding suburbs to confront those connected to the child’s disappearance. As she combs through the impoverished neighborhoods, Bindu, must she face her innermost fears but also the path that she has taken in life.

DRIFTING

(濁水漂流)

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Streaming Wednesday September 15 - Tuesday, September 21

Hong Kong | Drama | 2021 | 112 minutes

In Cantonese w/Chinese & English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Jun Li

STARRING: Frances Ng, Tse Kwan-ho, Loretta Lee, Chu Pak Hong, Baby Bo, Will OR

FILM SOURCE: MM2 Entertainment Hong Kong

Directed by the talented Hong Kong auteur Jun Li, who is part of the city’s burgeoning New Wave movement, the true-to-life DRIFTING demonstrates how this rising star of the city’s film industry doesn’t shy away from tough subjects. Instead of portraying the glamour and gloss of the city, Li exposes the grit and gentrification, as real estate developers and the government are in cahoots. Featuring a remarkable ensemble cast of veteran and emerging talents, we find a homeless community riddled with heroin addiction in down-and-out Sham Shui Po. With no compassion coming from nearby residents, these destitute, transient citizens are evicted by the police after their latest attempt to create a haven on the streets. They cling to each other as they journey through darkness with only fleeting moments of hope and comfort while taking revenge on the authorities who robbed them of the few possessions they still have.

***This film is part of the Hong Kong New Talents touring program***
NEVER STOP
(超越)

ADMISSION FREE
Streaming September 15 - 21
China | Sports Drama | 2021 | 98 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Bowen Han
STARRING: Zheng Kai, Li Yunrui, Cao Bingkun, Zhang Lanxin, and Sandrine Pinna
FILM SOURCE: China Lion

Filled with exhilarating and arduous training and competition scenes, NEVER STOP, a box office hit in China, is a sports comedy peppered with dramatic moments. Young running champion Tianyi Wu returns home to confront his archrival, Chaoyue Hao (played by Zheng Kai, known as “little cheetah” and star of the well-loved variety show Keep Running), whom he failed to surpass. Despite mentoring Tianye, Chaoyue cannot up his own game and decides to retire and start a shoe business which fails. When Tianye sees his hero overweight and no longer in his prime, he realizes he no longer idolizes Chaoyue. They wax nostalgic about their athletic careers, sparking a series of misunderstandings and conflicts as they are forced to confront life after retiring from the track, spurring an opportunity to process their feelings and heal from their past.

GULL
(갈매기)

MIDWEST PREMIERE
Streaming Wednesday September 15 - Tuesday, September 21
South Korea | Drama | 2021 | 74 minutes
In Korean w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Kim Mi-jo
STARRING: Kim Na-kyung
FILM SOURCE: M-Line Films Distribution

In an ever-gentrifying Seoul also comes changing attitudes towards women. In this moving drama, we find 60-year-old O-Bok, a Seoul fish vendor who is busy with preparations for her daughter’s wedding. Her life is turned upside down one night when Gi-taek, a fellow merchant and committee member involved with a community urban development project, rapes her. At first, O-Bok keeps the incident to herself but soon reveals it to her daughter and reports it to the police, leading to much upheaval in her life. Despite her diminutive appearance, O-Bok is fiery and feisty as she’s filled with feelings of anger and violation. She also gives voice to a population segment of older females who are victims of sexual assault, motivated to go beyond the traditional preventative and protective measures that have been aimed solely at 20- and 30-something women. The film’s title is inspired by director Kim Mi-jo’s love of Chekov and characterizes O-Bok as a gull—while the protagonist desires to escape and take flight from her challenges, she ascertains her need to stay rooted in her life and speak out to ensure the long-time violent, male-dominated society she lives in ceases to exist.
King Hu is arguably cinema's most accomplished director of wuxia action. He managed somehow to transcend the genre while operating almost entirely outside of the system, and defying popular conventions of the day. Hu was influenced not by earlier martial arts films so much as Hollywood westerns and Japanese samurai pictures, developing a style that was wholly original and enduringly influential.

Born in Beijing, Hu honed his craft in Hong Kong, working as a set decorator, actor, and screenwriter, before finally becoming a director. This jack-of-all-trades experience gave Hu the confidence to control every aspect of his own films, which proved as beautiful to look at as they are technically audacious. After scoring a breakout hit with 1966's COME DRINK WITH ME, a film credited with restoring nobility to the wuxia genre and facilitating the return of the female action heroine, Hu turned his back on Hong Kong and Shaw Brothers and moved to Taiwan in 1966.

In Taiwan, he directed DRAGON INN, the middle chapter in a loose trilogy (that also includes 1973's THE FATE OF LEE KHAN) focusing on watering holes and their transient patrons. Swapping out Shaw Brothers sets for vast expanses of empty wilderness, DRAGON INN is a masterclass in suspense and pay off, comprised of a series of dramatic showdowns between disparate travelers, all thrown together at the titular inn. Characterization is slight, but behavior and physical prowess let us know who to be wary of and who we should root for.

A TOUCH OF ZEN ventures even further afield, transplanting an assortment of characters to the overgrown ruins of a remote fort, where scholars, beggars, and fugitives lurk in ghostly shadow before eventually squaring off. Hu builds tension through our anticipation of violence, treating us instead to stunning locations and creepy atmospherics. Once the action does arrive it is even more impressive than before, as opponents of escalating ability duke it out until all are bested by the transcendental powers of Roy Chiao's enlightened Zen master.

One may be forgiven for confusing LEGEND OF THE MOUNTAIN and RAINING IN THE MOUNTAIN, as the shared attributes of these two later Hu films extend far beyond their similar titles. Filmed simultaneously in South Korea and both released in 1979, Hu employs many of the same actors and locations in both, in a cost-cutting exercise that would ultimately benefit both productions. LEGEND OF THE MOUNTAIN sees the director venture further into the realm of the supernatural, resulting in a sprawling three-hour haunted house ghost story, in which an assortment of conspiring spirits attempt to wrestle a powerful sutra away from Shih Chun's impoverished copyist. RAINING IN THE MOUNTAIN, conversely, emerges as a fast-paced heist caper, in which Hsu Feng's master thief is just one interested party to descend on a remote mountain monastery in the hopes of stealing an ancient prayer scroll.

In all these films, Hu's interest in compelling narrative is surpassed by his desire to revel in the natural beauty of his spectacular surroundings and create compelling action sequences of exhilarating speed and impossible ability. Rather than use wirework to gift his characters with otherworldly skills, Hu employs a variety of technical flourishes that elevate the action and heighten the sense of danger. Hu's camera weaves in and out of skirmishes, accentuating the balletic movements of his performers. Characters leap in and out of frame, or appear, as if by magic, as his camera pulls wide. Hidden trampolines launch fighters into the air, while Hu's rapid editing imbues them with superhuman speed to fly through the air with gravity-defying agility.

Hu's films are also distractingly gorgeous, bathed in dappled sunlight that pierces the forest canopy, tracking languidly across mist-covered mountain tops, and lingering on the indigenous wildlife that remains oblivious to the duplicity, betrayal, and violence unfolding around them. Ultimately it is these unique juxtapositions: beauty and bloodshed, swiftness and stillness, life and death, that define the masterful cinema of King Hu.

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James Marsh is a freelance film critic, programmer, and industry consultant with 20 years experience living and working in Asia. Currently based in Hong Kong, James writes for the South China Morning Post, is resident film critic for RTHK Radio 3, and serves as Asian Editor for ScreenAnarchy.com. He is also a programming consultant for Fantastic Fest in Austin, TX, English Editor for the Hong Kong International Film Festival, and previously worked as an acquisitions consultant for XYZ Films.

The King Hu series were all restored by the Taiwan Film and Audiovisual Institute (TFAI).
A TOUCH OF ZEN
(俠女)

Streaming Wednesday, September 22 - Tuesday, September 28
Taiwan | Martial Arts Restored Classics | 1971 | 180 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: King Hu
STARRING: Feng Hsu, Chun Shih, Ying Bai, Roy Chiao, Han Ying-chieh
FILM SOURCE: TFAI, Taiwan

A young scholar named Gu lives near a rundown fort rumored to be haunted. One day, he befriends Yang, a mysterious beauty hiding inside the fort. After a night of passion with Gu, Yang reveals that her father, an honorable official, was executed by the nefarious but powerful Eunuch Wei. Now she is also hounded by Wei’s agents, who attempt to eradicate all traces of her family.

Gu then finds himself caught up in her struggle to survive. When the agents attack the fort, he devises brilliant tricks to crush the siege. Yang leaves Gu after the battle to becomes a Buddhist nun, trying to escape from her past. However, when she realizes that Gu is in danger, she and her mentor set out to protect him. When they confront Eunuch Wei’s evil minions, a battle of carnage ensues...

DRAGON INN
(龍門客棧)

Streaming Wednesday, September 22 - Tuesday, September 28
Taiwan | Martial Arts Restored Classics | 1967 | 111 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: King Hu
STARRING: Ling-feng Shann-gguan, Chun Shih, Ying Bai, Chien Tsao
FILM SOURCE: TFAI, Taiwan

In mid-Ming Dynasty, the loyal and upright Minister of Defense, Yu Qian, has been executed by the emperor’s chief eunuch, Cao Shao-lin, a formidable martial arts master. Yu’s children have been sentenced to exile, but as they travel toward the empire’s western border, Cao dispatches two of his top agents from the Eastern Depot to assassinate them. Having reached Dragon Inn, located in the desolate lands near the border, the agents and their henchmen prepare an ambush.....
RAINING IN THE MOUNTAIN
(空山靈雨)

Set in a remote Buddhist monastery in 16th century China, RAINING IN THE MOUNTAIN deals with a power struggle that ensues when the Abbot of the Three Treasures Temple announces his imminent retirement. The aging Abbot invites three outsiders to advise him on the critical choice of appointing his successor: Esquire Wen, a wealthy patron of the monastery; General Wang, commander-in-chief of the local military; and Wu Wai, a respected lay Buddhist master.

Within the monastery, several disciples aspiring to the position begin to collude individually with Esquire Wen and General Wang. But these two invited advisers have come with seditious intent, scheming to obtain the priceless scroll housed in the monastery: the scriptural text of “The Mahayana Sutra” hand-copied by Triпитaka....

LEGEND OF THE MOUNTAIN
(山中传奇)

A young scholar is tasked by an eminent monk to transcribe a Buddhist sutra said to have immense power over the dead. To execute his work in peace, he travels to an old fort in a remote town, where he comes across a series of strange events and characters, including a young woman named Melody.

After a night of feasting, he wakes up to find Melody in his bedroom, who claims they spent the night together. Driven by moral responsibility, he marries Melody, without knowing that she has an ulterior motive. Later he meets another mysterious beauty named Cloud, who is smitten with him and tries to save him from malicious spirits in the ghost realm....
South Korea has been referred to the plastic surgery capital of the world with an estimated one million procedures occurring annually, one-third of them involving the country’s female population. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that the horror-anime BEAUTY WATER serves as a mirror to the country’s contemporary society and its obsession with cosmetic surgery. Evolving out of the web cartoon series Tales of the Unusual, BEAUTY WATER compassionately examines an on-the-surface subject that turns out to be more than skin deep. With comparisons to 200 POUNDS OF BEAUTY (2006), BEAUTY WATER is indicative of the desire to alter one’s appearance not only to become more beautiful but also more successful. We see protagonist Yaeji treating her skin with a seemingly miraculous potion of promise that results in a traumatizing bodily transformation. With the high level of negative stereotypes surrounding one’s appearance—including laziness and incompetence—a number of young Korean professionals perceive cosmetic surgery as the ticket to climbing social and corporate ladders, without considering the negative impacts on one’s mental well-being and self-worth. Because the great shame of how Yaeji looked before using beauty water, she exhibits Body Dysmorphic Disorder, wearing oversized clothing and isolating in her room to avoid people. And, she carries the burden of regret for missed opportunities, taking her down a rabbit hole filled with feelings of disgust and self-hatred. The preoccupation to alter her appearance is like a drug unto itself, deepening her self-abuse, and rendering her unrecognizable.
**THE FABLE**
(ザ・ファブル)

**MIDWEST PREMIERE**

**Streaming Wednesday, September 29 – Tuesday, October 5**

*Japan | Action/Comedy | 2019 | 150 minutes*

*In Japanese w/English subtitles*

**DIRECTOR:** Kan Eguchi  
**STARRING:** Jun’ichi Okada, Fumino Kimura, Mizuki Yamamoto  
**FILM SOURCE:** Film Business/Nippon Television Network

We find the assassin Fable—known to destroy anyone in a matter of seconds—overworked. His boss orders him to take a year-long vacation and not murder anyone. Fable takes on the name Akira Sato (with his partner as Yoko, living as brother-sister with a pet parakeet) and a civilian existence, exercising restraint from his murderous ways by working part-time in a design firm, binge-watching his favorite television shows and awkwardly living a routine life in seclusion.

The assassin begins to enjoy a normal life with no body counts but troubles come looking for him. Other assassins are after him and others need his help. The Fable must survive a life-or-death situation without killing anyone. Can he ever get his peaceful life back?

**LOVE, LIFE AND GOLDFISH**
(すくってごら)

**US PREMIERE**

**Streaming Wednesday, September 29 – Tuesday, October 5**

*Japan | Comedy/Musical/Romance | 2021 | 93 minutes*

*In Japanese w/English subtitles*

**DIRECTOR:** Yukinori Makabe  
**STARRING:** Matsuya Onoe, Kanako Momota, Hayato Kakizawa, Nicole Ishida  
**FILM SOURCE:** Hakuhodo DY Music & Pictures Inc.

Makabe Yukinori’s live-action adaptation of Noriko Otani’s manga Sukuttegoran, LOVE, LIFE AND GOLDFISH is a musical comedy that concerns Tokyo bank clerk Makoto Kashiba whose sole purpose in life is work. A stuffer of emotions, he goes sideways, hurling a barrage of insults at his boss. This results in a demotion from the big city bank and Makoto is sent to a small-town branch. There, he crosses paths with kimonooed beauty Yoshino Ikoma who lures him into an atmospheric world of glass tanks and bowls filled with goldfish. It’s love at first sight but in typical Makoto fashion, he immediately pushes down his feelings. Meanwhile, aspiring actress-turned-bar owner Asuka falls for Makoto. We can’t help but wonder what will ultimately happen in Makato’s new life and who—like snagging a goldfish—he’ll catch. Don’t miss this enchanting escape that draws the viewer into a joyful sensory experience filled with rich lighting, spectacular sets, and J-Pop tunes along with the reminder not to take oneself too seriously.
ITO (ITOMICHI)
(いとみち)

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Streaming Wednesday, October 6 – Tuesday, October 12
Japan | Drama/Comedy | 2021 | 116 minutes
In Japanese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Yokohama Satoko
STARRING: Ren Komai, Etsushi Toyokawa
FILM SOURCE: Ark Entertainment, Inc.

Grand-Prix and Audience Award winner at the 2020 Osaka Asian Film Festival, ITO is based on Osamu Koshigaya’s novel Itomichi, the title coming from the scar formed in the nail of a string player. This charming Japanese comedy-drama stars Ren Komai as the title character Ito Soma and is directed by Yokohama Satoko, both of whom are from Aomori Prefecture, located in the Tōhoku region on the northern end of Honshu, Japan’s largest island, and also the movie’s setting. Ito plays the three-string Tsugara-shamisen with great talent, performing songs that originate from Aomori Prefecture, where she is a high school student. Despite Ito’s gift for music, passed down by her now deceased mother, she struggles to perform in public due to shyness and a strong Tsugaru dialect. This also means she has no social life. Therefore, change is necessary for Ito, so she takes a part-time position working in a maid café—a cosplay restaurant—which deeply concerns her father, Koichi (Etsushi Toyokawa). Through her job, she comes out of her shell, crossing paths with many people and prompting a blossoming as she gains confidence and grows as a person.

THE REUNIONS
(吉祥如意)

U.S. PREMIERE

Streaming Wednesday, October 6 – Tuesday, October 12
China | Drama/Family | 2020 | 78 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Da Peng
FILM SOURCE: Midnight Blur/Parallax Films

Fraught with tension and a wide range of emotions, THE REUNIONS is an introspective family drama that serves as a departure for director Da Peng, known for box office hits like JIAN BING MAN and CITY OF ROCK. City life creates distance and forgetfulness for Da Peng as he returns home after a 10-year absence to see his family while carrying regret that he wasn’t present for his grandmother’s final years. Meanwhile, his sister Lili, an urban dweller herself, feels the pressure to care for their aging estranged uncle, Ji Xiang, who suffers from the effects of brain damage, while also caring for her young child. With death, aging, distance, and the growing gap between urban versus rural life in an ever-changing China, we find a family at a turning point, resigned to the inevitable reality that it is falling apart.
GEORAMA BOY, PANORAMA GIRL
(ジオラマボーイ・パノラマガール)

MIDWEST PREMIERE
Streaming Wednesday, October 6 – Tuesday, October 12

Japan | Drama/Romance | 2020 | 105 minutes
In Japanese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Natsuki Seta
STARRING: Anna Yamada, Jin Suzuki
FILM SOURCE: Nikkatsu Films

Set against the backdrop of the 2010s Tokyo development boom, GEORAMA BOY, PANORAMA GIRL is a coming-of-age love story based on Kyoko Okazaki’s 1980s Manga series. Literally stumbling into a bloody-nosed Kenichi Kanagawa lying face-down on the sidewalk, it’s love at first sight for high school student and typical girly-girl Haruko Shibulya. Nerdy, academic-minded Kenichi drops out of high school right when he’s due to take college entrance exams to take up skateboarding to look cool. Haruko is smitten with Kenichi, tittering about with her girlfriends as they fantasize about romance and their quest to find prince charming. Meanwhile, Kenichi finds himself drawn to the temptress Mayumi, but disapproves when he learns she is a prostitute. While the constant is girls will be girls and boys will be boys, this drama is a refreshing and unconventional take on teen love in contemporary Japan.

AKIN ANG KORONA

U.S. PREMIERE
A special screening hosted by FYLPRO.ORG.
Saturday, October 9 with details TBA
More info: asianpopupcinema.org/akin

The Philippines | 2019 | 92 minutes
In Tagalog w/English subtitles

WRITEOR/DIRECTOR: Zig Madamba Dulay
STARRING: Nar Cabico, Angel Aquino, Aaron Rivera, Kiray Celis, Kiest Viray, Phi Palmos

Life turns riveting for Nanong when the tabloid-format reality TV show, AKIN ANG KORONA chances upon his curious life in a sleepy seaside town in Catanauan Quezon. Nanong agrees to film his daily life drying herring, with a deal that they would help find his lost father. Nanong’s quest for a missing parent will become a search of truth, of wonder, of the self-wrapped in the direction framed for and by the TV program.

This film received 11 nominations and picked up Sinag Award for the Best Actor (Nar Cabico) with the film winning the People’s Choice Award for writer/director Zig Madamba Dulay!
ABOUT SOPHIA’S CHOICE

Founded by international film and cultural curator Sophia Wong Boccio, SOPHIA’S CHOICE (蘇菲亞的精選) is a Chicago-based 501 C(3) not-for-profit cultural organization incorporated in May, 2015. Our vision is to foster an appreciation for diverse Asian cultures. We realize our vision through a multi-pronged mission to:

- Cultivate an interest in and understanding of Asian cultures via a diverse offering of Asian films;
- Connect the Asian film industry with local Chicago film students, educators and professionals; and
- Promote Chicago as a destination for international visitors.

Asian Pop-Up Cinema (亞洲躍動電影展) (APUC) is a semi-annual film festival—spring and fall—that provides a platform for specially curated Asian films in their original languages with English subtitles. Before COVID-19 films were presented primarily at the AMC River East 21 in Chicago or other live pop-up venues. We went “hybrid” since the fall of 2020 by presenting films online, in cinema, as well as a drive-in location with live audiences. All the indoor events are in compliance with CDC guidelines since public safety remains our top priority!

Since our inaugural season in the fall of 2015 through Season 12 in 2020, APUC has premiered close to 200 screenings of contemporary Asian films from mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. By hosting one event at a time, each APUC selected film and its filmmaker receive their own spotlight, resulting in a more meaningful dialogue with the audience and media. Based on the filmmaker’s availability, we also collaborate with other professional and academic institutions nationally and internationally to create outreach opportunities such as encore screenings, classroom lectures, panel discussions and industry networking, ensuring their visits to Chicago are as fulfilling as possible for both the filmmakers and the city.

Year 2021 will see us continuing with our online offerings supported by a special grant from the Arts Work Fund. The APUC Virtual Cinema will serve our new audience of home viewers and help to keep our long-time audience members engaged.

**SAVE THE DATE**
Saturday, 3:00PM to 6:00PM
October 9, 2021

A Special Event celebrating the Filipino American History Month with the U.S. premiere of “AKIN ANG KORONA” with producer & lead actor in attendance.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS OF SOPHIA’S CHOICE GOVERNING BOARD

Sophia Wong Boccio, Founder & Executive Director
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TEAM APUC

TEAM APUC is made up of film festival professionals based in Chicago, Hong Kong, Japan, Los Angeles, London and Seoul. Each individual in TEAM APUC is part of the incredible driving force behind the successful planning and implementation of our hybrid festival each season. Each season we welcome new members on board alongside many returning members. Bravo to TEAM APUC and to ALL our dedicated volunteers.

Sophia Wong Boccio – Festival Director
Ron Falzone – Humanities Sidebar Host
Kevin Ma – Hong Kong Cinema Virtual moderator/translator
Mark Schilling – Japan Cinema Advisor/Host
Andrew Haskins – “King Hu Series” Host
Nika Denise Moore – Virtual Cinema Coordinator
Raymond Hui – Festival Trailer Editor/Videographer
Faith Wells – Theater Operations/Front-of-House Manager
Danielle Garnier – Media Relations Director
Karen Durham – Program Writer
Tracy Chan – Assistant to Festival Director
Sandra Vandenbos – Graphic Designer
Brandon Doherty – Animation Designer
Helen Smith – Web Master

INTERPRETERS
Yu-Jean Chon – Korean
Masami Takahasi – Japanese

VOLUNTEERS
Ben Hart
Bettina Davis
Khalid Lindsey
Timothy Doan

asianpopupcinema.org/team-apuc
TICKETING INFORMATION: asianpopupcinema.org/13boxoffice

FILMS AT AMC RIVER EAST (322 E. ILLINOIS) OR DAVIS THEATER (4614 N LINCOLN AVE)

$15/adult, $12/senior (65+) and $10/student w/valid ID. (Rush tickets at the door are available at $20 cash only).

Doors open 30 minutes prior to showtimes.

NOTE: With proof of vaccination cards, you can get free tickets to attend any of our films presented indoors at AMC River East or Davis Theater.

Please email asianpopupinfo@gmail.com with proof of vaccination to redeem your free tickets. Please provide the film titles/dates of screenings.

APUC13 VIRTUAL
Welcome to our APUC Virtual Cinema powered by DRM compliance eventive.

THIS SEASON WE ARE OFFERING 16 FILMS ONLINE.
Each film will be available for 7-day rental, geo-blocked for the U.S. or Midwest only at $8-$10 per rental.

Please rent your films during the availability window and once you “unlock” each film you will have 24 hours to finish watching.

WARNING: APUC13 virtual films are available to rent and view in the US or Midwest ONLY. APUC13 has various safeguards in place to protect the rights of creators, including traceable watermarking. Recording or photographing is strictly prohibited.

More info: asianpopupcinema.org/13virtual

ALL ACCESS PASSES ARE ON SALE NOW UNTIL THE FIRST SCREENING SCHEDULED AT APUC VIRTUAL OR CHITOWN.

APUC Virtual: $75.00 plus fees for 16 titles

BUY YOUR VIRTUAL PASSES HERE:
https://apuc13.eventive.org/passes/buy/AAPass13

Films at Chitown: $120.00 plus fees for 6 titles

BUY YOUR CHITOWN PASSES HERE:
https://www.tickettailor.com/events/asianpopupcinema/568764

Also, out of our 30+ films screenings, thanks to our generous sponsors, select films are Admissions Free/RSVP required basis.

Public Safety is our priority.
Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC) follows area mandates and meets or exceeds CDC guidelines. In accordance with the CDC’s most current guidelines, masks are recommended for everyone regardless of vaccination status. Guests not yet fully vaccinated are asked to wear a mask throughout the building. Masks may be removed while actively enjoying food and drinks. Signage will be visible in each theater if a mask mandate is in place or if the theater is located where COVID transmission rates are high.

More info about the films: asianpopupcinema.org/13incinema

Films at Chitown Drive-In (2343 S. Throop)

$25 per vehicle or $15/walkup bringing personal folding chair.

The screenings will start at sunset @ ChiTown Drive-in located at 2343 S. Throop St. Chicago, IL 60608. The per vehicle price will be increased to $30.00 if purchased at the gate (or at the door).

More info about the films: asianpopupcinema.org/13Chitown

Consent to be photographed/filmed: Asian Pop-Up Cinema and its representatives may photograph, film, and/or otherwise record attendees at all festival activities. By attending, you consent to such photography, filming, and/or recording and to any use in any and all media throughout the universe in perpetuity and without compensation for the use of your appearance, voice, and name for promotional and/or advertising, or any other purpose by Asian Pop-Up Cinema and its affiliates and representative.
RAGING FIRE
(怒火)

Wednesday, August 18, 7:00PM @ AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois)
Hong Kong | Action/Crime | 2021 | 126 minutes
In Cantonese with English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Benny Chan
STARRING: Donnie Yen, Nicholas Tse, Qin Lan
FILM SOURCE: Well Go USA.

RAGING FIRE tells the story of a highly respected cop whose past comes back to haunt him when a former protégé seeks revenge against all those who have wronged him. It is the final project from late director Benny Chan, a Hong Kong filmmaker best known for helming Jackie Chan’s NEW POLICE STORY, ROB-B-HOOD, WHO AM I? and SHAOLIN. Chan was unable to complete post-production due to his unexpected death at age 58 in August 2020. RAGING FIRE grossed $37.2 million on its July opening weekend in China and was released nationally in the U.S. on August 13. APUC hosted a special pre-festival screening on August 18.

CONNECT WITH US:
Email: asianpopupinfo@gmail.com
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