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YOUR PASSPORT TO ASIAN CINEMA

SEPTEMBER 17 - DECEMBER 4, 2016

Contemporary Asian films with subtitles

www.asianpopupcinema.org





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YOUR PASSPORT TO ASIAN CINEMA

Asian Pop-Up Cinema is proud to present Season III – your passport to Asian cinema! Twelve award-winning films, including nine Chicago premieres, will be shown starting September 17 through December 4, 2016. Filmmakers from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Philippines, Taiwan and Tibet will share their unique stories on the big screen.

Guests joining us with their films for Season III include:

Lee Ho-jae, Director of our opening night film, *Sori: Voice From the Heart*
Yuki Tanada, Director of our closing night film, *Round Trip Heart*
Steve Chan Chi-fat, first-time feature Director of *Weeds on Fire*



*All films will be shown in their original languages with English subtitles.

Each screening is followed by Q&A moderated by Ron Falzone, associate professor at the Cinema Art + Science Department of Columbia College Chicago, or other film experts.

See you at the movies!

More info: www.asianpopupcinema.org

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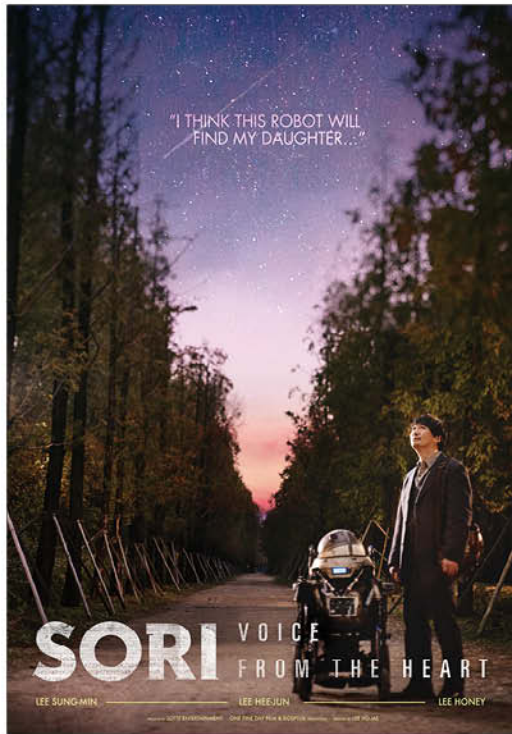
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OPENING NIGHT



Sori: Voice From The Heart – Chicago Premiere – South Korea | 2016 | 117 min | DCP | Korean w/subtitles



Dir. Lee Ho-jae



Cast: Lee Sung-min, Lee Hee-joon and Lee Honey.

Saturday, September 17, 1:30 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

followed by an afternoon tea party at the lobby of the theatre. Suitable for all ages.

With the help of an artificial intelligence robot, a grief-stricken father (veteran actor Lee Sung-min) sets out to find his missing daughter. *Sori: Voice from the Heart* is a surprise-filled "R2-D2 Drama" that won the 2016 Audience Choice Award at the Udine Far East Film Festival.

Director Lee Ho-jae will be in attendance to share his thoughts on the making of the movie that according to the director is "a drama first before being a Sci-Fi!"

Tickets are: \$18 - \$25 including the post-screening discussion and an after party with refreshments. Seniors/Students discounts are available.

To buy tickets: www.asianpopupcinema.org/tickets



HONG KONG, WE REMEMBER



Presented in association with the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in New York, we are proud to premiere two Hong Kong films that are noteworthy for their Hong Kong historical and cultural references.

Weeds on Fire – directed by Steve Chan Chi-fat

Hong Kong | 2016 | DCP | 92 min. | Cantonese w/subtitles

Wednesday, September 21, 7 PM @ AMC River East 21

Director in attendance.

Weeds on Fire is an energetic little picture inspired by the true 1980s story of the city's first Chinese youth baseball team. Back then like it is now, baseball was a fringe activity in Hong Kong, as the film makes clear in opening scenes when principal Lo (Liu Kai-chi) seeks funds to start a team at his school in the Sha Tin District. *Weeds on Fire* delivers a crowd-pleasing tale of plucky underdogs, complete with entertaining training scenes and players striving to triumph against the odds. The team's field of dreams is merely a weed-ridden covered reservoir, but on it the filmmaker captures games with great energy and accompanies them with a rousing score. Also, *Weeds on Fire* is the first finished work to come out of the government-run First Feature Film Initiative. Chan's project was selected in late 2013, winning funding of US\$260,000 to fully cover film production and sales.

- (Excerpt from Tim Youngs, Udine Far East Film Festival 18 catalog)

Wong Ka Yan – directed by Benny Lau

Hong Kong | 2015 | Blu-ray | 96 min. | Cantonese w/subtitles

Friday, September 30, 7:30 PM @ Studio A, Joffrey Tower

Post screening Q&A with a guest expert on Hong Kong history.

Benny Lau's *Wong Ka Yan* tells the story of an overgrown kid, Chan Chun-yin (played by the handsome heartthrob Wong Yau-nam) who plays the guitar and lives on the outlying island of Peng Chau in 1992. He meets a pretty ticket seller named Wong Ka-yan one night while trapped inside the cinema and decides that she must be "The One". However, when he returns the next day to woo the girl, she happened to have just quit her job. The narrative of the film then evolves into this obsessive search for Wong Ka-yan, but in the process Chan finds many other people named Wong Ka-yan. Shot with washed-out color showing Ping Chau as this relaxing rural atmosphere, the film has succeeded in transmitting a sense of old-timey charm. For a small Hong Kong film, *Wong Ka Yan* has a very creative concept, enjoyable themes and identifiable emotions without being overly pretentious – the movie simply *feels* like a Hong Kong film.

- (Excerpt from Kozo, LOVEHKFILM.com)



Weeds on Fire



Wong Ka Yan

Weeds on Fire – Chicago Premiere –
Hong Kong | 2016 | DCP | 92 min. | Cantonese w/subtitles



Dir. Steve Chan Chi-fat



Cast: Liu Kai-chi, Lam Yiu-sing, Tony Wu and Hedwig Tam

Wednesday, September 21, 7 PM @ AMC River East 21

Director in attendance.

Synopsis:

Inspired by the true 1980s story of the city's first Chinese youth baseball team, first time director and his collaborators – many of them emerging talent plus a few industry veterans like co-producers Chan Hing-kai and O Sing-pui – created a compelling film on an unusually tight budget (US\$260,000) with astonishing results. Placing the focus on two team members -- long-time friends and public housing neighbors Tse Chi-lung (Lam Yiu-sing) and Fan Chun-wai (Tony Wu), *Weeds on Fire* develops an undercurrent of coming-of-age drama that has universal appeal to the American public.

Hamog (Haze) – Chicago Premiere –
Philippines / 2015 / DCP / 92 min. / Tagalog w/subtitles



Dir. Ralston Jover



Cast: Teri Malvar, Zaijan Jaranilla, Samuel Quintana, Bon Lentejas, Ana Luna

Sunday, September 25, 2 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

Synopsis:

Ralston Jover, the director of the critically acclaimed *Bakal Boys* and Brillante Mendoza's former screenwriter, delivers an empowering, thrilling and impassioned tale of a gang of street kids: Rashid (Zaijan Jaranilla), Jinky (Teri Malvar), Tisoy (Sam Quintana) and Moy (Bon Lentejas). Unexpected events in their daily routine of crime and survival in the busy streets of Manila lead to dramatic changes for all of them. Performed by four talented young actors, with Teri Malvar's fierce performance winning the Screen International Rising Star Award at the 15th New York Asian Film Festival and the Best Actress Award at the 38th Moscow International Film Festival in June of 2016. Besides winning the Outstanding Artistic Achievement Awards from the 19th Shanghai International Film Festival, the Director also won the Russian Film Critics' Jury for the Best Film award.

Wong Ka Yan – Chicago Premiere –
Hong Kong | 2015 | Blu-ray | 96 min. | Cantonese w/subtitles



Dir. Benny Lau



Cast: Wong Yau-nam, Karena Ng, Tyson Chak Hoi-tai, Janelle Sing, Pai Piao and Gigi Leung Wing-kei.

Friday, September 30, 7:30 PM @ Studio A, Joffrey Tower

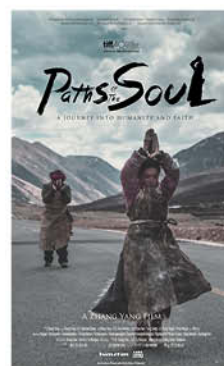
Synopsis:

"Wong Ka Yan" is a very popular name in Hong Kong. Most characters in films were called Wong Ka Yan. During his search for a girl named Wong Ka Yan whom he met only once, Chun-yin, brings life-changing impact to each character by that name and finds new insights into his life. The story is set in Peng Chau in the summer of 1992. A tranquil small island in Hong Kong with beautiful scenery, audiences will experience the peaceful, simple village life.. *Wong Ka Yan* is a romantic story about seek and find. Audiences will recall the silly things that we have all done when we were young, which we cherish forever in our memories.

(Excerpt from director/writer Benny Lau's statement.)

(Courtesy of Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in New York, this film will be presented FREE for the public. RSVP via email: asianpopupinfo@gmail.com 1 week before screening is required.)

Paths of the Soul
China / 2015 / DCP / 115 min. / Tibetan w/subtitles



Dir. Zhang Yang



Cast: non-professional actors

Wednesday, October 5, 7 PM @ AMC River East 21

Synopsis:

To fulfill his uncle's wish, Nyima decides to go by foot on a two thousand kilometer pilgrimage to Lhasa and the sacred Kang's Mountain. Some friends, neighbors and relatives decide to join him. Soon the group of 11 is ready to start an epic journey to expel faults and enlighten the soul. Shot over the period of one year, the film is a love letter from Zhang Yang (best known for *Shower*, *Quitting* and *Getting Home*) to those incredible men and women who decide to leave their routine, overcoming the physical pain of their journey, in the search of appeasing their soul. This film was rated 4th favorite by the 2016 Rotterdam International Film Festival audience.

"There's never been a road movie quite like *Paths of the Soul*, an extraordinary chronicle of ordinary Tibetan citizens undertaking a pilgrimage to Lhasa."

- Richard Kuipers, VARIETY.

ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA SEASON III

SEPTEMBER

17



*Sori: Voice From
The Heart*
Sat., September 17, 1:30 PM
Wilmette Theater

21



Weeds on Fire
Wed., September 21, 7 PM
AMC River East 21

25



Hamog (Haze)
Sun., September 25, 2 PM
Wilmette Theater

30



Wong Ka Yan
Fri., September 30, 7:30 PM
Studio A, Joffrey Tower

OCTOBER

5



Paths of the Soul
Wed., October 5, 7 PM
AMC River East 21

9



*When The
Curtain Rises*
Sun., October 9, 2 PM
Wilmette Theater

12



Siti
Wed., October 12, 7 PM
Chicago Culture Center's
Claudia Cassidy Theater

30



The Wailing
Sun., October 30, 1:30 PM
Wilmette Theater

NOVEMBER

9



A Fool
Wed., November 9, 7 PM
AMC River East 21

13



The Actor
Sun., November 13, 2 PM
Wilmette Theater

30



The Assassin
Wed., November 30, 7 PM
AMC River East 21

DECEMBER

4



Round Trip Heart
Sun., December 4, 4 PM
Wilmette Theater

When The Curtain Rises – Chicago Premiere –

Japan | 2015 | DCP | 119 min. | Japanese w/subtitles



Dir. Motohiro Katsuyuki



Cast: Momota Kanako, Kuroki Haru, Tomai Shiori and Takagi Reni

Sunday, October 9, 2 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

Synopsis:

Based on a novel by theater director Hirata Oriza, director Motohiro Katsuyuki focuses on the process of putting on a play including the artistic and personal growth of its young actors as its centerpiece of *When The Curtain Rises*. The film goes beyond its 'let's put on a play' story to the more universal theme of doubt to positive action, from aspirations to accomplishments. The five young leads, are members of the idol group Momoiro Clover Z, and their learning curve as actors overlaps with that of their characters in the film. Thanks to the director's choice of using tracking camera views from an objective middle-distance, the young actresses are able to portray normal kids working hard in pursuit of a common goal. Finally, the cement that holds the story together is Kuroki's Yoshioka, the new coach of the theatre club. Only 24 years old at the time of filming, Kuroki had already amassed an impressive list of acting honors, including the Berlin Film Festival's Silver Bear for Best Actress for her performance in another family drama *The Little House*.

(Excerpts from Mark Schilling, JAPAN TIMES.)

Siti – Chicago Premiere –

Indonesia | 2014 | DCP | 88 min. | B&W | Javanese/Indonesian w/subtitles



Dir. Eddie Cahyono



Cast: Sekar Sari, Delia Nuswantoro, Chelsy Bettido and Ibnu Widodo

Wednesday, October 12, 7 PM @ Chicago Cultural Center's Claudia Cassidy Theater

Synopsis:

Siti, a beautiful young woman, has to find means to care for her paralyzed husband, her son and her mother-in-law. By day, she sells snacks on the beach; by night, she sells herself at an illegal karaoke bar. Her encounter with a policeman who falls in love with her, makes her life even more complicated.

"Shot in black-and-white and – even more audaciously – in Academy ratio [the film standard from 1932 – 1952], the Javanese filmmaker has produced a vivid, intense character study of a small-town working-class woman unraveling"

– Clarence Tsui, THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

"In her first feature-length movie, Sekar Sari [the leading actress], a postgraduate student in performing arts, performed the most memorable scene where she dresses and makes up for work" in front of her helpless, bedridden husband."

– Derek Elley, FILM BUSINESS ASIA

(Thanks to DCASE of Chicago, this particular screening will be presented FREE and open to the public.

Please RSVP via email: asianpopupinfo@gmail.com)

The Wailing

S. Korea | 2016 | Blu-ray | 156 min. | Korean w/subtitles



Dir. Na Hong-jin



Cast: Hwang Jung-in, Kim Hwan-hee, Kwak Do-won and Kunimura Jun

Sunday, October 30, 1:30 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

Synopsis:

In this tense supernatural thriller, locals become suspicious after a foreigner mysteriously appears in a quiet rural village. Suspicion turns to hysteria and investigators look to a shaman for clues after a series of brutal killing sprees. *The Wailing* smashed box office records when it debuted in South Korea and many audience members saw the film several times searching for new clues in this highly talked-about ending.

Over six years in the making, director Na Hong-jin's meticulously crafted follow-up to the globally acclaimed *The Yellow Sea* and *The Chaser* (his third to premiere at the Festival de Cannes) smashed box office records upon its debut in South Korea. Fans made return viewings to catch new clues and debate what's sure to be the most talked-about ending of 2016. Young actor Kim Hwan-hee gave an extraordinary performance as the demonic possessed daughter.

Dress code: Halloween costumes are encouraged. We have prepared some fun prizes for the three best-dressed attendees!!!

A Fool – Chicago Premiere –

China | 2014 | DCP | 105 min | Mandarin w/subtitles



Dir. Chen Jian-bin



Cast: Chen Jian-bin, Wang Xue-bing and Jin Shi-jia

Wednesday, November 9, 7 PM @ AMC River East 21

Synopsis:

With his directorial debut, well-known Chinese actor, Chen Jian-bin offers a hard-edged mainland noir where kindness and cruelty, madness and reason, greed and humanity all struggle for dominance and the fool might not be who you think. Chen is best known for playing Cao Cao in the historic TV drama *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* that got every single Chinese household glued in front of their TVs in 2010. In this film, he delivers an amazing performance as the simple, slightly crude, Latiaozi, a goat farmer who has a son in jail. Chen was awarded both the Best Actor and Best New Director prizes for *A Fool* at the 2014 Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan. The film's domestic and worldwide release was delayed when supporting actor Wang Xue-bing was arrested for drug possession – an ironic twist to the morale of the story.

The Actor – Chicago Premiere –

Japan | 2016 | DCP | 123 min. | Japanese w/subtitles



Dir. Satoko Yokohama



Cast: Ken Yasuda, Kumiko Aso, Shohei Uno, Hirofumi Arai

Sunday, November 13, 2 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

Synopsis:

Takuji Kameoka has made a career out of masterful performances for the silver screen and he would be a household name – if it weren't for the fact that his filmography consists entirely of bit parts. As the prospect of a breakout role in a foreign art-house director's newest work appears, so too does the possibility of winning the heart of izakaya owner Azumi Murota. In her hotly anticipated follow-up to the breakout *Bare Essence of Life*, director Satoko Yokohama adapts Akito Inui's original novel, crafting this quietly darling tribute to the workaday human magic underlying the gleam of cinema. Ken Yasuda, known for *TEAM NACS* and many voice performances for Studio Ghibli, is irresistible in the film's title role, while Yokohama's regular Kumiko Aso shines just as brightly as the bar owner.

(Excerpt from Japan Cuts 2016 catalog)

The Assassin

Taiwan | 2015 | Blu-ray | 107 min. | Mandarin w/subtitles



Dir. Hou Hsiao-hsien



Cast: Shu Qi, Chang Chen, Zhou Yun and Tsumabuki Satoshi

Wednesday, November 30, 7 PM @ AMC River East 21

Synopsis:

Back with his first film in eight years, Taiwanese legendary director Hou Hsiao-hsien wowed the world with this awe-inspiring and wondrous take on the traditional martial arts film. The story is simple, if elusive - in 9th-century China, Nie Yin-niang is a young woman who was abducted in childhood from a decorated general and raised by a nun who trained her in the martial arts. After 13 years of exile, she is returned to the land of her birth as an exceptional assassin, with orders to kill her betrothed husband-to-be. She must confront her parents, her memories, and her long-repressed feelings in a choice to sacrifice the man she loves or break forever with the sacred way of the righteous assassins. Rich with shimmering, breathing texture and punctuated by brief but unforgettable bursts of action, *The Assassin* is a martial arts film like none made before it. In 2015, *The Assassin* garnered top awards at all major film festivals in Asia and also won the most prestigious Best Director Award at the 2015 Cannes Film Festival. Asian Pop-Up Cinema is proud to show it on the anniversary of its debut N. America release.

SOPHIA'S CHOICE

Founded by international film and cultural curator Sophia Wong Boccio, **SOPHIA'S CHOICE** is a one-year old Chicago-based not-for-profit with the multiple missions of cultivating the general public's interest in Asian culture via diverse offerings of Asian films; connecting the Asian film industry with local industry for both professional and educational exchanges; and promoting Chicago as a destination for Asian film company production.

Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC) is the signature program presented by **SOPHIA'S CHOICE** – a semi-annual film festival taking place during the spring and fall seasons each year. Our two core venues are AMC River East 21 in downtown Chicago and the Wilmette Theatre in the northern suburbs. Each screening is followed by Q&A moderated by Ron Falzone, associate professor at the Cinema Art + Science Department of Columbia College Chicago or other film experts. Guest directors and VIPs will attend selected screenings for panel discussions.

Since our inaugural season in the fall of 2015, APUC has presented two North American premieres, 12 Chicago premieres and a total of 18 contemporary Asian titles including films from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Vietnam. Artists who attended APUC I & II include Directors Yuichi Satoh of "*Poison Berry In My Brain*" and Yukinori Makabe of "*I am a Monk*" from Japan; Director Tom Lin Shu-yu of "*Zinnia Flowers*" from Taiwan; Director Herman Yau Lai-to of "*The Mobfathers*" and "*Ip Man: The Final Fight*" from Hong Kong, who was also our first recipient of the APUC Pinnacle Award honoring his lifetime career achievement; and a Japanese Cinema specialist Mark Schilling.

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**We thank the following individuals for their advice and assistance
in curating the final program for Asian Pop-Up Cinema Season III:**

Beijing: Anne Sophie Lehec

Hong Kong: Ryan Law, Tim Youngs, Felix Tseng,
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Pop-Up Venues

Chicago

AMC River East 21 - 322 E Illinois Street
Chicago Culture Center's Claudia Cassidy Theater - 78 E Washington Street
Studio A, Joffrey Tower - 10 E Randolph Street

Wilmette

Wilmette Theatre - 1122 Central Avenue

Tickets are General Admission only

\$7 - \$25 per person with special discounts for groups of 10+, students and seniors.

Tickets are available online:

www.asianpopupcinema.org/tickets for AMC River East 21

www.wilmettetheatre.com for Wilmette Theatre

Opening Night and Closing Night are special events and different ticket rates will apply.

More info: www.asianpopupcinema.org

CLOSING NIGHT



Round Trip Heart - Chicago Premiere -

Japan | 2015 | 97 min | DCP | Japanese w/subtitles



Dir. Yuki Tanada



Cast: Oshima Yuko and Okura Koji

Sunday, December 4, 4:00 PM @ Wilmette Theatre

Closing Night Reception to follow.

Asian Pop-Up Cinema Season III will close with *Round Trip Heart*, by director Yuki Tanada, a romantic comedy between a food and drinks cart pusher (starring Oshima Yuko) working on the Odakyu Romance car and a shoplifter (starring Okura Koji) who turns out to be a failed movie producer.

Director Tanada, who last filmed her own screenplay for the charming 2008 road movie *One Million Yen Girl*, will test audience sympathy with a sudden shift of focus between our heroine, the cart pusher and the loser movie producer. We are very honored to host a female director - a first for APUC - who will join us for the film, post-screening discussion, and closing night festivities. Please join us to celebrate the end of another successful season!

Tickets are: \$18 - \$25 including the post-screening discussion and Closing Night Reception.

Seniors/Students discounts are available.

To Buy Tickets: www.asianpopupcinema.org/tickets