

~ THE 9TH ANNUAL TORONTO REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ~

reel asian

NOVEMBER 23-27, 2005 ~ NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: *Malaysia*

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Welcome To The 9th Annual
~ TORONTO REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ~



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Earlier this year an arts columnist writing in a national newspaper questioned the need for one city to mount so many niche film festivals, especially more than one with "Reel" in its name. But there's no question in my mind about the vital role Reel Asian has played over the course of eight festivals in championing work that tends to get lost at other, bigger festivals. Exposing the local audience to films by emerging East and Southeast Asian filmmakers, particularly North American ones, has been central to Reel Asian's programming mandate from the beginning. This year, we open with a film by Michael Kang, whose short film *Japanese Cowboy* was shown at Reel Asian back in 2000. We're happy to be welcoming him back with his feature debut, *The Motel*.

Reel Asian will once again play host to many visiting artists, who will be coming from Hong Kong, all over the U.S. and Canada, and our national spotlight country, Malaysia, to present their films. They will join a contingent of local filmmakers whose works we are proud to be showing before the hometown crowd. We also invite you to attend our two panel discussions – which are free and open to the public – featuring local and visiting artists who will share the stories behind their films.

I'd like to thank the wonderful community of people in the 401 Richmond building, where the Reel Asian office is located, who have generously shared their time and knowledge with me as I've navigated the hazards of organizing my first festival. (Special thanks to everyone at Trinity Square Video!) I'd especially like to express my gratitude to my predecessor, Sally Lee, who left behind a festival with a strong reputation for bringing innovative works by Asian filmmakers to Toronto audiences; supporting Canadian filmmakers; and being the kind of organization to which volunteers and community willingly donate their time, enthusiasm and energy. The latter includes our board of directors, advisory, all those who sat on our Special Events, Screening and Corporate Development committees, and our incredible 'volunteer' staff (Aram, Tom, Nicole and Bryan). Lastly, this year's event could not have happened without my tireless and dedicated colleagues, so to Grace and Raymond, thanks for always delivering more than was expected of you.

As for being one of several festivals in town with "Reel" in our title … all I can say is: We thought of it first!

Deanna Wong, *Executive Director*

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAMMER

I'd like to begin this introduction by telling you how regretful I am. Regretful that there are still a ton of great recent Asians films that may never see the light of day here in Toronto. As a city with such a large and diverse Asian community, the lack of an opportunity to see such gems as Liu Jiayin's *Oxhide* or Lee Yoon-ki's *This Charming Girl* is a tragedy that is borderline criminal.

We here at Reel Asian try our best to alleviate the situation by showing many of these cinematic nuggets. But as a small festival, our resources are limited, and even a five-day event such as this already stretches our budget and manpower to the max. As such, we are but a poor Coles Notes version of what an Asian film festival can be, especially in a city as big and as international as Toronto.

But there is one thing that you can do to help. If you like the films we show, please tell others about us, and help us truly become a festival built by a community of film enthusiasts such as yourselves. In turn, we can grow and bring more fantastic works here for you to enjoy. Nothing would make a programmer like me happier than this.

As for this year's programme, I am very proud to present our National Spotlight on Malaysia. With the advent of adventurous, award-winning filmmakers such as Ho Yuhang and Yasmin Ahmad as well as the directors we are featuring, a focus on this new epicentre of innovative Asian cinema is more than warranted. Malaysia's fame as a cultural hotpot is also reflected in our lineup, with one film in Malay, one in Chinese, and one in Tamil. A special thanks to Amir Muhammad for his incredibly generous help with the films.

I also discuss our Canadian Artist Spotlight this year, Simon Chung, with a paragraph that introduces his shorts programme, *Of Love and Minorities*. Another highlight for me is *No Chemistry Sets Allowed*, our Experimental Shorts compilation. There are truly wonderful Asian and Asian-Canadian filmmakers working in this genre, and I'm delighted to have a programme dedicated to these unusual and astonishing films.

Finally, I would like to thank the Screening Committee for their time, energy and general good taste in film. I wish everyone a happy festival viewing experience. If not, you know where to find me …

Raymond Phathanavirangoon, *Programmer*



eyf

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Trinity Square Video

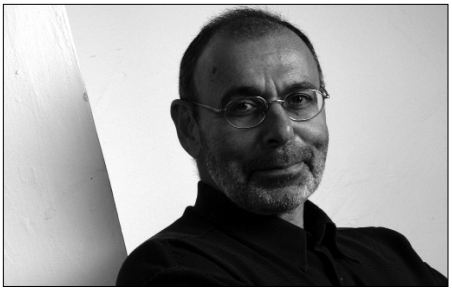
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The National Film Board of Canada is proud to be part of the 9th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival is a unique showcase for contemporary Asian cinema and work from the Asian diaspora. The Festival provides a vital public forum for home-grown Asian media artists and their work, and fuels the growing appreciation for Asian cinema in Canada.

As Canada's public film producer and distributor, we applaud your efforts and share your commitment to supporting new Canadian artists.

At today's NFB, we're producing animated and documentary films from Canada's Asian communities that reflect the true face of our nation today. We're also working hard to ensure that these films are seen by the widest possible audiences, telling the stories and exploring the issues that are of importance to citizens everywhere.

Enjoy the festival!

Jacques Bensimon
Government Film Commissioner and
Chairperson of the National Film Board of Canada



From urban life and dramatic landscapes to inspiring heroes and personal struggles, all this – and more – makes for distinctive Canadian storytelling. Fittingly, Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival has put together a diverse program of works that spotlights Canada, and other cultures from around the world.

Part of celebrating outstanding Canadian productions is also recognizing the talent behind them, and Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival plays a valuable role in showcasing Canada's creators and their productions.

Canadian film continues to evolve as an art form that remains vibrant and alive by relying on the energies and ingenuity of a new generation.

For these very reasons, and in the spirit of our commitment as cultural investor to help Canadian works reach audiences, Telefilm Canada is a proud sponsor of this festival.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Telefilm, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you and invite you to discover what Canadian cinema has to offer.

Congratulations to the organizers, volunteers and community whose hard work has helped make this edition of Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival possible.

S. Wayne Clarkson
Executive Director
Telefilm Canada



The Honourable Tony Ianno, P.C., M.P. Trinity-Spadina
L'honorable Tony Ianno, c.p., député Trinity-Spadina

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
401 Richmond Street West, Suite 309
Toronto Ontario
M5V 3A8

November 24th, 2005

Dear Friends:

As the Minister of State for Families and Caregivers, and the Member of Parliament for Trinity-Spadina, it is with great pleasure that I extend my congratulations and best wishes to the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival on the occasion of your 9th anniversary.

By showcasing contemporary Asian cinema from across the Asian diaspora, Reel Asian fosters the exchange of cultural and artistic ideas between east and west, and serves as a vital forum for Asian media artists to promote their work. It also makes an invaluable contribution to our community's economic and cultural growth.

As an integral part of Trinity-Spadina's artistic and cultural community, you play a unique role alongside other leading organizations and institutions such as the Toronto International Film Festival, the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Film Festival, the Toronto Fringe Festival, and the Entertainment District in enriching our multicultural traditions and identities.

I would like to commend each and every one of the organizers of the Reel Asian festival for their hard work and dedication, and wish you continued success in the future. You have all helped to make Toronto one of the leading cultural and cinematic centres in the world.

Sincerely,

Tony Ianno,
Member of the Privy Council,
M.P., Trinity-Spadina

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Mayor
DAVID MILLER

A Message from Mayor David Miller

It is my pleasure to extend greetings and a warm welcome to everyone attending the 9th edition of the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

This film festival will showcase contemporary films by East and Southeast Asian filmmakers from Canada and around the world. Toronto is the ideal location for this exciting Festival, which is recognized internationally for presenting a high calibre of contemporary work from filmmakers around the world.

Toronto provides the film industry with a genre of facilities from pre-production to post-production. The film industry's economic impact on our city is phenomenal, injecting $1.5 billion into our local economy and generating thousands of jobs. Hosting this event not only adds to our many arts and entertainment venues but is also a gateway for talented filmmakers to showcase their work.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, I congratulate and thank the organizers, sponsors and volunteers for their hard work and commitment in making this year's event possible. To everyone, my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable Festival and a pleasant stay in our city.

Yours truly,

Mayor David Miller

TORONTO

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Deadline:	
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For more information about programs to Ontario-based, professional film and media artists e-mail **info@arts.on.ca**, visit **www.arts.on.ca** or call **416-961-1660 / 1-800-387-0058.**

All Ontario Arts Council programs are open to Aboriginal artists or arts organizations, and artists or arts organizations from diverse cultural communities.

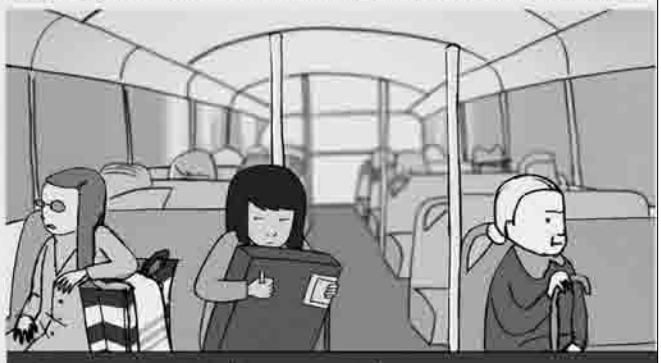
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Special thanks to
Amir Muhammad for his invaluable help on the Malaysian programmes, and to Ms. Suzilah Mohd. Sidek of the High Commission of Malaysia (Ottawa) for her support.

All our fantastic volunteers!

Awards

Reel Asian is proud to offer four awards this year. The three artist awards will be selected by an independent jury comprising three members of Toronto's media arts community. New for this year will be the Audience Award for favourite feature, chosen by the audience.

@WALLACE LOCAL ARTIST AWARD

Films made by Toronto artists are eligible for this prize

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TSV EMERGING LOCAL ARTIST AWARD

Films made by emerging Toronto artists are eligible for this prize

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NFB

Best Independent Canadian Film or Video Award
All Canadian films are eligible for this prize

$2,000 CASH PRIZE

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All feature films at the festival are eligible for this prize

$250 CASH PRIZE

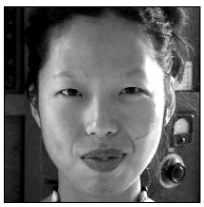
Jury Members



Jason Anderson is a Toronto-based film critic and arts journalist. His writing on film, music and literature appears regularly in *The Globe and Mail*, *Toronto Life*, *eye Weekly* and *Toro*. His stories have also appeared in *Saturday Night*, *Cinema Scope*, *THIS Magazine* and *Entertainment Weekly*. In 2003, he was a juror for Canada's Top Ten. His first novel, *Showbiz*, was published in the fall of 2005 by ECW Press.



John Greyson is a Toronto film/video artist whose works have won acclaim worldwide. For his first feature-length film, 1988's *Urinal*, he received the Teddy Award at the Berlin Film Festival. After 1993's Zero Patience (Best Canadian Film, Sudbury Film Festival), his 1996 film *Lilies* snagged four awards at the Genies, including Best Picture. 1997's *Uncut*, 2000's *The Law of Enclosures* and 2004's *Proteus* all continued to bring accolades to the director. Apart from his film work, he also edits and authors numerous books, anthologies and essays. An assistant professor in film at York University, he was awarded the Toronto Arts Award for Film/Video, 2000.



Min Sook Lee is a writer, broadcaster and an award-winning documentary director/producer. Her most recent documentary, *Hogtown: The Politics of Policing* won Best Feature-length Canadian Documentary at the 2005 Hot Docs Documentary Film Festival. Lee's first feature *El Contrato*, produced by the National Film Board of Canada, looked at the lives of Mexican migrant farm workers in Southern Ontario. In 2005, Lee was presented the Cesar E. Chavez Black Eagle Award, a project of the Cesar E. Chavez Foundation, and awarded to Lee for her contribution to building awareness of migrant workers' rights in Canada.

Industry Panels

In an effort to expand Reel Asian's horizons into the art of filmmaking itself, we are proud to present two industry panels this year. Moderated by distinguished local veteran filmmakers, the panels will feature discussions with established independent directors and cinematographers from around the world.

LIVING HERE, SHOOTING THERE:

THE GLOBALIZATION OF INDEPENDENT CINEMA PRODUCTION

Productions of international scale are a reality in filmmaking nowadays. And it is not only due to the possibility of expanding markets for films globally, but it is also a way to connect various cultures together via a common language: cinema. It is no surprise, then, that even independent films are getting in on the act. For our panel, we discuss the logistics of working in different countries with experienced international filmmakers. Find out what it takes to shoot in a different country, and the benefits and pitfalls that come with the experience. Especially for Asian-Canadian filmmakers, this is a timely and vital question in the age of cross-cultural globalization.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 11:00AM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

MODERATOR

Anita Lee

PANELISTS

Simon Chung, director of *Innocent*
Neill dela Llana, co-director of *Cavite*
Grace Lee, director of *The Grace Lee Project*
Kwoi Gin, director of photography for the *Chinese Restaurants* series

MODERATOR BIOGRAPHY

Anita Lee is a producer of award-winning films, founder of Reel Asian and was recently appointed as a new producer at the National Film Board of Canada (Ontario Centre).

THE REALITY OF DV FILMMAKING

With the rapid advancement in digital video technology, it has become easier and easier for fledgling directors to just go out there and make films. But is it truly as easy as it sounds? We ask our panel of filmmakers regarding their independent works and the experiences they have had in making their DV films a reality. Find out first-hand from the hard-earned lessons of those who have done it all before, from feature filmmakers and documentarians to directors of photography.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 11:00AM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

MODERATOR

Richard Fung

PANELISTS

Deepak Kumaran Menon, director of *The Gravel Road*
Julie Mallozzi, director of *Monkey Dance*
Jeannette Loakman, director of *Annie Ong: Lost and Found*
Kevin C.W. Wong, director of photography for *The House* and *Tomorrow is Today*

MODERATOR BIOGRAPHY

Richard Fung is a Toronto-based video artist and writer. He teaches at the Ontario College of Art and Design.

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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 7:00PM AT BLOOR CINEMA

PHOTO: TOM LEGOFF



The Motel

THE MOTEL

DIR: MICHAEL KANG / 2005 / USA / 35MM / 76 MIN / IN ENGLISH
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / CANADIAN PREMIERE

Growing up fatherless in the middle of nowhere, USA, is bad enough. But when you're Ernest, a chubby 13-year-old Asian-American, you're stuck cleaning the sheets that have been spoiled by strangers nightly. Living in a sleazy motel with his dragon lady of a mother and teased by the kids in town, his coming-of-age is less a rite and more an excuse to get out of Dodge.

Enter Sam (Sung Kang, *Better Luck Tomorrow*) – a Korean American with a taste for female ethnic diversity and the odd boozing habit. An unlikely friendship is struck, and suddenly Ernest is propelled into manhood via a host of ill-conceived ideas, including a *carpe diem* moment with his crush, a no-nonsense waitress at the nearby Chinese restaurant.

But no matter how badly planned the duo's misadventures may be, Ernest's disarming innocence betrays a desperate sense of longing. And it is this beguiling charm that carries through to the very end, along with moments of genuine hilarity and pathos. Propped by ace performances by the young cast members, *The Motel* offers an authentic look at a complex childhood of a minority, shedding light on the awkward moments that build us up to who we are. Michael Kang's self-assured direction already earned the film The Humanitas Prize in the Sundance Feature Film Category, putting it in the same category as the acclaimed *Whale Rider* and *Love & Basketball*.

"a fresh take on characters and conventions,
and compels interest with shrewd, sympathy-inspiring storytelling"
~ JOE LEYDON, VARIETY ~



PHOTO: CY JO

Michael Kang met acclaim with his 1998 short film A Waiter Tomorrow, *which received the FilmCore Post-Production Grant. With his second work,* Japanese Cowboy, *he received the Special Jury Prize at Film Fest New Haven. He workshopped his script for* The Motel *at the Sundance Filmmakers Lab. It is his first full-length feature film.*

PRECEDED BY:

SCREEN TEST

DIR: LINDA LEE / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 7 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / TORONTO PREMIERE

Acting is not an easy career … especially when you're an ethnic minority. With sharp humour and quick-witted irony, *Screen Test* reveals how one actress survives in the cut-throat business of film entertainment.

Linda Lee was born in Montreal and grew up in Vancouver. A few years ago she returned to her place of birth to do a degree in Media Studies. In Screen Test *she aims her camera at her sister Judy, an actor and writer.*

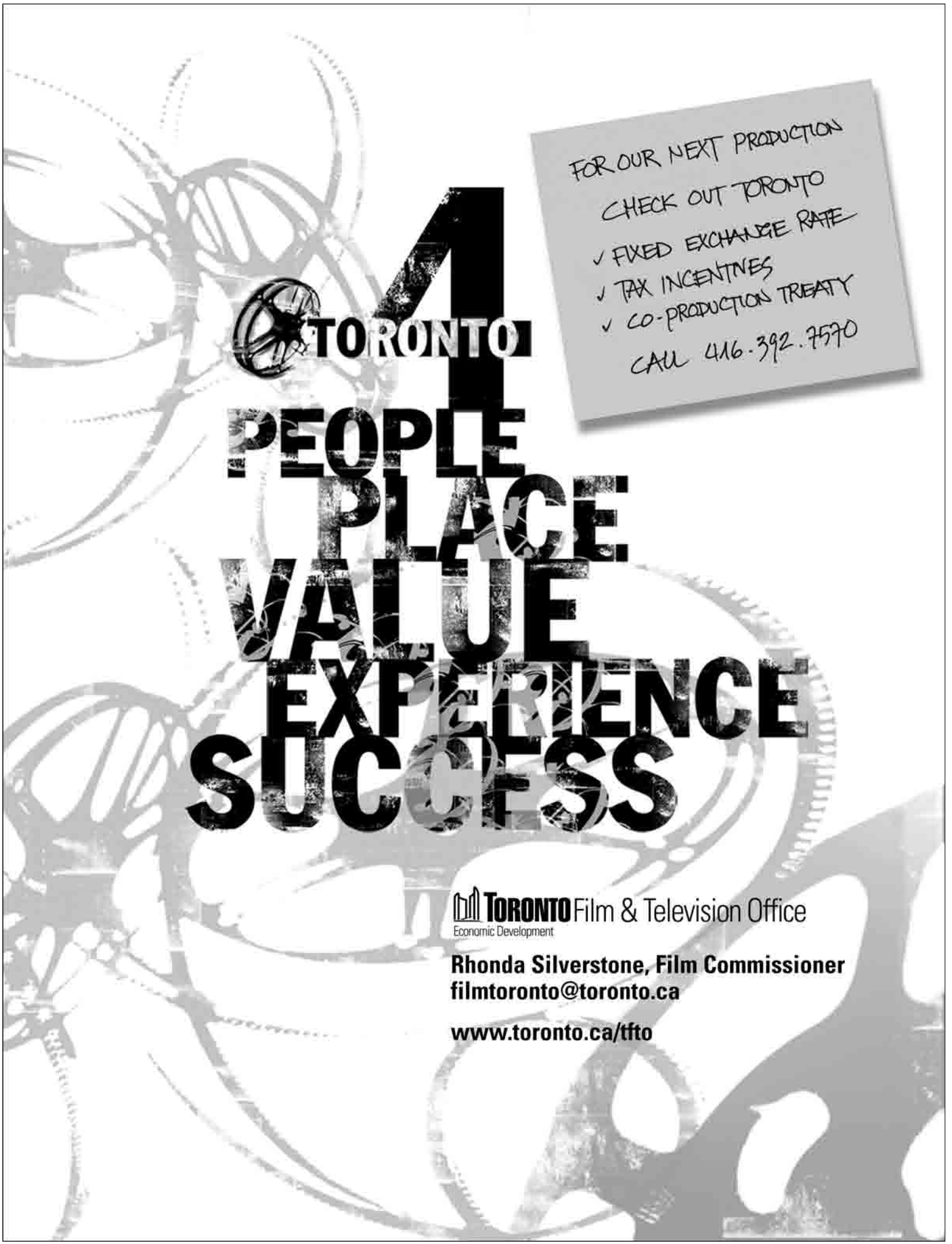
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CANADIAN ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 12:30 AT INNIS TOWN HALL

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FIRST LOVE AND OTHER PAINS



Of Love And Minorities

~ SHORT FILMS BY SIMON CHUNG ~

As a Canadian citizen and a Hong Kong resident, Simon Chung makes films that truly represent his dual culture. With over thirteen years of filmmaking experience and numerous awards, he is also one of the artists most consistently represented at Reel Asian (*Life is Elsewhere* and *Stanley Beloved* were shown at the second Reel Asian, while *First Love and Other Pains* screened a year later). In the context of his newest film *Innocent*, these shorts throw a sharp relief upon his themes of race, cultural confusion and sexual identity. As a pioneer in queer independent Asian cinema, we gladly salute him with this retrospective.

LIFE IS ELSEWHERE

DIR: SIMON CHUNG / HONG KONG / 1996 / VIDEO / 14 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

An award-winner at both the Image Forum Festival in Japan and the Hong Kong Independent Short Film & Video Awards, this lyrical early work from Simon Chung reveals the thematic concerns that he would continue to explore in his later films. A young boy's nervous encounter with his headmaster, a teenager's unexpected reunion with his mother and a policeman's special assignment are all common slices of life in transient Hong Kong. Everyone wants to get away, but perhaps the grass is always greener …



Simon Chung was born in Hong Kong and majored in film production at York University. His role in Hong Kong's film scene has resulted in the creation of the territory's foremost independent distributor, Ying E Chi. After his first short, 1992's Chiwawa Express, *1996's* Life is Elsewhere *was fêted at the Image Forum in Japan and Hong Kong's independent film awards.* Stanley Beloved *(1997) and* First Love and Other Pains *(1999) similarly earned him acclaim at festivals worldwide.* Innocent *(2004) is his feature-length debut.*

STANLEY BELOVED

DIR: SIMON CHUNG / HONG KONG / 1997 / 16MM / 20 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Named after a seaside town located at the southern shore of Hong Kong, this small enclave is where two close friends, Jaime and Kevin, spend their lazy summer together. One a Caucasian and the other of mixed race, they grew up in upper class households – families with the means to further their educations abroad. Simon Chung paints a realistic and sensitive portrayal of adolescents at their crossroads, with questions of race, class and sexual identity constantly hovering in the horizon along with their unknown future.

FIRST LOVE AND OTHER PAINS

DIR: SIMON CHUNG / HONG KONG / 1999 / 35MM / 50 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

This time, race is not the only factor in this cross-cultural love story between a university professor and his student. In post-colonial Hong Kong, Hugh Graham is a frustrated English intellectual teaching mostly gay literature to his bewildered pupils. Middle-aged and stuck in a personal crisis of gigantic proportions, he nevertheless attracts the attention of Mark, a young local who is smitten with the professor's lectures. What begins is a complex relationship marked with Freudian psyche, cultural barriers and personal addiction – a subtle allegory for the twilight of the British colonial past and the dawn of Chinese rule in Hong Kong.

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CANADIAN ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 8:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



Innocent

INNOCENT

DIR: SIMON CHUNG / 2005 / CANADA/HONG KONG / VIDEO / 80 MIN
IN ENGLISH, CANTONESE AND MANDARIN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / CANADIAN PREMIERE

Vulnerable young teen Eric is at a crossroads in his life, both geographically and emotionally. A reluctant immigrant plucked from the familiarity of his Hong Kong existence to the rootless suburbia of Toronto, he struggles with his sexual identity while his nuclear family slowly crumbles around him. Soon, he finds himself falling for a succession of men while learning and growing from every painful experience.

Similarly, director Simon Chung also straddles two cultures. A Canadian filmmaker who lives in Hong Kong, he chose Toronto as the backdrop due to the parallels this story has with his own life. A culmination of the coming-of-age exploration seen in his previous shorts, this feature-length debut is an incisive and nuanced take on the difficulties in reconciling the often conflicting aspects of oneself – in this case, being Asian in North America and gay in a heterosexual world.

But the genius of this film is in the development of the incidental characters, most importantly Eric's own troubled family members. Each comes with a set of all-too-believable flaws, rendering a mosaic of fractured souls that are as endemic in our society as they are tragic.

Innocent is a quintessential Torontonian tale. With new immigrants comprising such a large part of our social fabric, Chung forces us to face the reality of their existence, and to make us see the dark, grey world they face every day as they step out into their new lives.



Simon Chung was born in Hong Kong and majored in film production at York University. His role in Hong Kong's film scene has resulted in the creation of the territory's foremost independent distributor, Ying E Chi. After his first short, 1992's Chiwawa Express, *1996's* Life is Elsewhere *was fêted at the Image Forum in Japan and Hong Kong's independent film awards.* Stanley Beloved *(1997) and* First Love & Other Pains *(1999) similarly earned him acclaim at festivals worldwide.* Innocent *(2004) is his feature-length debut.*

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NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: MALAYSIA

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 6:00PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



The Beautiful Washing Machine

THE BEAUTIFUL WASHING MACHINE

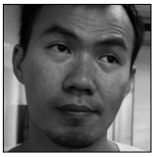
DIR: JAMES LEE / 2004 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 113 MIN
IN MANDARIN AND CANTONESE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
TORONTO PREMIERE

Malaysian-born Tsai Ming-liang may have settled in Taiwan, but his torch is carried in his homeland by James Lee, the prolific filmmaker who rose to prominence via his acclaimed shorts such as *Room to Let* and *Ah Yu's Story*. *The Beautiful Washing Machine*, his fourth feature, was made with a nearly non-existent budget. That didn't stop FIPRESCI member Nenad Dukic from proclaiming that "*The Beautiful Washing Machine* seems to confirm once again that films of exceptional quality are no longer the privilege of only large and famous Asian filmmaking countries". Indeed, the film would go on to win the prestigious Golden Kinaree for best ASEAN film at the Bangkok Film Festival.

Gleefully laced with black humour, the film first follows hapless young Teoh, who is unceremoniously dumped by his girlfriend and is left without the ability to clean his clothes. Upon purchasing a second-hand washing machine at a local appliance store, the temperamental device becomes the start of many multi-charactered misadventures involving all manners of dirty laundry.

Plumbing the lives of Chinese Malaysians and their ironically repressed anxieties, Lee's deliberately long, slow takes exemplifies the innovative new force that goes beyond the skin-deep beauty of filmmaking. With the ever-modernising Kuala Lumpur as a setting, love is just another fleeting stain upon memory that disappears with a good rinse and spin.

"As chillingly humorous as some of the Taiwanese master's best work"
~ DAVID NG, THE VILLAGE VOICE ~



James Lee was born in 1973 in Ipoh, Malaysia. A self-taught filmmaker, in 2001 he directed his first fiction film Snipers, *followed by* Ah Beng Returns, *a highly stylized experimental film, and the acclaimed* Room to Let. *He founded Doghouse73 Pictures, an independent DV-filmmaking outfit that has produced award-winning features such as Amir Muhammad's* The Big Durian *and Ho Yuhang's* Sanctuary. The Beautiful Washing Machine *is his fourth DV-feature.*

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NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: MALAYSIA

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



The Big Durian

THE BIG DURIAN

DIR: AMIR MUHAMMAD / 2003 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 75 MIN
IN MALAY AND ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
TORONTO PREMIERE

Trivia: Did you know that the English word "amok" actually comes from the Malay language? Perfectly illustrating the meaning of the word is what occurred one particular day in October 1987, when a soldier went on a murderous frenzy with an M-16 in multiethnic Kuala Lumpur.

Eighteen years after the fact, the incident remains etched in the memories of Malaysians. It was an event that threatened to drag the country into a disastrous race riot. Soon after, Malaysia was under a clampdown by the Internal Security Act, and its political repercussion would endure to this day.

Amir Muhammad's irreverent, acerbic semi-documentary recounts those tension-filled days via interviews and footage of the crime scenes. He also gives us an unvarnished and uncensored commentary on one of today's most modernised Muslim nations. Hailed by *San Francisco Chronicle* critic Chuck Stephens as "the freshest voice in Islamic filmdom," Muhammad is frequently credited as the godfather of independent Malaysian filmmaking. His first feature, *Lips to Lips*, was the first ever Malaysian film on DV. With his second work, *The Big Durian*, he hit the big time: Sundance, Buenos Aires, Hong Kong and Special Mention citations at both Vancouver and Yamagata film festivals. Moreover, it inspired a whole new generation of young Malaysian filmmakers to pick up their cameras.

The *Village Voice*'s Dennis Lim called *Durian* "an impertinent love letter to its people." And why not? After all, despite the political content, Muhammad always has his tongue firmly in his cheek.

"Amir is cinema's most interesting essayist since the heyday of Chris Marker"
~ TONY RAYNS, VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL GUIDE 2005 ~



Amir Muhammad was born in 1972 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. An independent writer and filmmaker, he has a law degree but does not use it. In 2000 he wrote and directed Malaysia's first DV feature, Lips to Lips. *His next project, a collection of short videos called* 6horts, *garnered acclaim worldwide, as did the seminal* The Big Durian *(2003). He recently completed the experimental* Tokyo Magic Hour *(2005) and the documentary* The Year of Living Vicariously *(2005).*

PRECEDED BY:

LOST
FRIDAY
CHECKPOINT

DIR: AMIR MUHAMMAD / 2002 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO 10/8/7 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Three shorts from Amir Muhammad's seminal and hilarious *6horts* are presented here. *Lost* is a wry yet political look at the loss of one's identity … card. Religious musings on Islam turn into a profane yet spiritual rumination in *Friday*. Finally, *Checkpoint* shows what the post-9/11 world means to the traveller going on the cheap.

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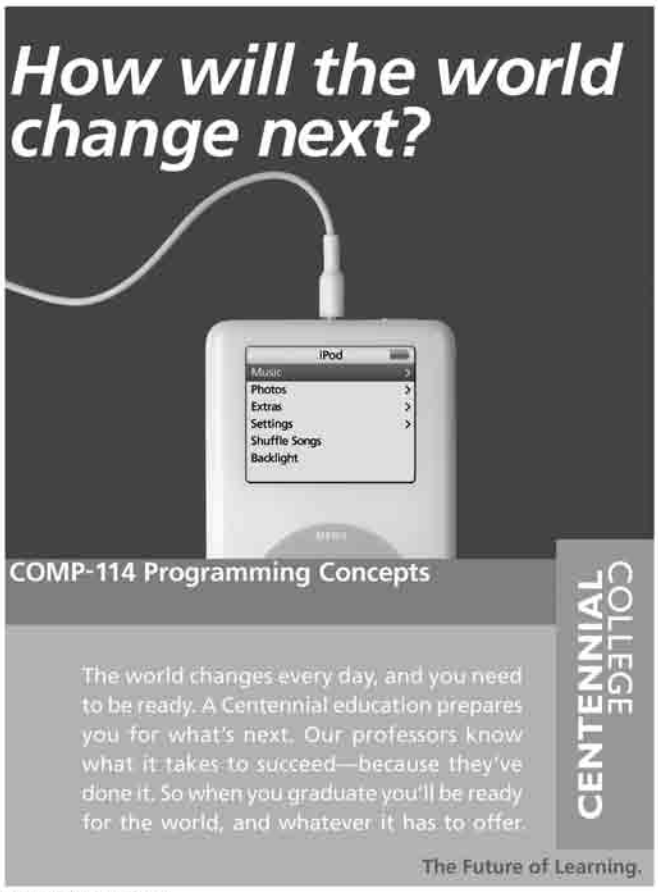
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NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: MALAYSIA

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 8:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



The Gravel Road

THE GRAVEL ROAD

DIR: DEEPAK KUMARAN MENON / 2004 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 92 MIN
IN TAMIL WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / CANADIAN PREMIERE

Few directors make their first film when they are 24 years old. But Deepak Kumaran Menon's *The Gravel Road* stands out not because of the filmmaker's age, but because of the maturity and wisdom evident in his debut feature. With measured and gentle direction that is reminiscent of Hou Hsiao-hsien in the 80's, it is an amazing achievement considering its shoestring budget and DV origin.

Even more remarkable is the subject matter – the first film in decades that deals exclusively with the Tamil minority living in Malaysia. Far from being political, the film instead is a rich household drama that was inspired by his own mother's experiences back in the 60's. Indeed, wswg.org critic David Walsh calls it "one of the loveliest and most moving films I've seen in years."

Brought up in a family with more progressive ideals than the usual plantation resident, Shanta is a girl with big dreams. Though not from a wealthy background, she in encouraged to take up employment by helping a local Chinese tailor. But in a society where women quietly take their place behind the man, she would learn that there is a heavy price to pay for pursuing one's own path in life.

With beautifully understated performances and gorgeous cinematography, *The Gravel Road* is an exemplary work that showcases the upcoming talents of Malaysia's minorities in terms of artistic self-expression.

"Quietly lyrical… observes life on a rubber estate
with the kind of delicate attention to detail that recalls Satyajit Ray"
~ DENNIS HARVEY, VARIETY ~



Deepak Kumaran Menon was born in 1979 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. He graduated from Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Malaysia in the field of film and animation in the year 2001. A year later, Deepak formed One Hundred Eye, a video production company where he produced and directed several television shows and commercials. Since then, he has been involved in many prominent independent productions, including Amir Muhammad's seminal The Big Durian *(2003).*

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NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: MALAYSIA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 12:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

LOVE FOR DOGS



WOMAN OF THE COSMOS



Malaysian Deluxe Platter

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

As The *Village Voice*'s Dennis Lim stated so succinctly, "New Thai cinema? So 2002. As fest globe-trotters know, the Southeast Asian hot spot of the moment is Malaysia." These shorts, by established directors as well as upcoming talents, are proof-positive of such worthy praise. As varied in their culture as they are in language, they also amply represent Malaysia's cultural diversity.

LOVE FOR DOGS

DIR: WOO MING JIN / 2003 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 25 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

One of the most accomplished shorts to come out of Southeast Asia in recent memory, *Love for Dogs* features remarkably controlled long takes that magnifies the glaring loneliness of two individuals: a conniving vagabond and a girl who pretends to be deaf-mute. With austere, minimalist scenes best compared to Tsai Ming-liang, the two individuals' inevitable encounter is simultaneously sad, comic, uncomfortable and romantic. A must-watch.

Woo Ming Jin was born in Malaysia in 1976. A graduate of Film and Video Production at San Diego University, he has made several short films and music videos. Monday Morning Glory *(2005) is his first feature, followed by the recent* Salon *(2005).*

WOMAN OF THE COSMOS

DIR: DIFFAN SINA NORMAN / 2003 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 4 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

There are no real Malaysian cosmonauts. But Diffan Sina Norman's imaginative animated short creates an alternate world where a Muslim woman is picked, in a game show, to become the first Malaysian in space. Drawn in a style reminiscent of elementary school textbooks, it is both a hilarious satire on his own people as well as a good-old fashioned story about (im)possible dreams.

Diffan Sina Norman was born in Malaysia in 1983. He directed two music videos at the age of 20 that won prestigious medals in the Cyberjaya digital-video competition.

KAMUNTING

DIR: AMIR MUHAMMAD / 2002 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 15 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Part of Amir Muhammad's acclaimed *6horts, Kamunting* is by far the most controversial. As with the other films in the series (three others are presented with *The Big Durian*, also at Reel Asian), they are essay-films that are narrated primarily through text and visuals. As always, humour and politics go hand-in-hand. This time, Muhammad visits a prisoner arrested as a result of Malaysia's Internal Security Act, a policy that allows the government to hold prisoners for any unspecified amount of time without trial.

Amir Muhammad was born in 1972 in Kuala Lumpur. He wrote and directed Malaysia's first DV feature, Lips to Lips*, in 2000.* Filmography: 6horts *(2002),* The Big Durian *(2003),* Tokyo Magic Hour *(2005),* The Year of Living Vicariously *(2005).*

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NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT: MALAYSIA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 12:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

I DREAM OF THE FAT MAN



BERNAFAS DALAM LUMPER



Malaysian Deluxe Platter

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

I DREAM OF THE FAT MAN

DIR: MAK JOON KEAT / 2005 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 2 MIN
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

A highly surrealistic experimental animation, its title is self-explanatory. The myriad of bizarre symbols cohere into a surprising revelation at the conclusion of the film.

Mak Joon Keat was born in Ipoh, Malaysia, and is a recent graduate of the New Media course at The Centre for Advanced Design, Kuala Lumpur.

LINDA

DIR: KIT ONG / 2005 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 10 MIN
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

This jet-black comic thriller has a simple but effective premise: what do you do if someone recognises you, but you don't remember having ever met them? As Ween convinces Linda to recall their past friendship, we are left to wonder if the same situation could ever happen to us … and ponder the old adage: never take lifts from strangers.

Kit Ong has been working in advertising for over a decade and started making shorts only this year. He has so far made four, each in a different language. He is now preparing for his debut feature, The Flowers Beneath My Skin.

RAINING AMBER

DIR: AZHARR RUDIN / 2005 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 9 MIN
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

Gene Kelly doesn't star in *Raining Amber*, but his influence can be felt in this wordless, deadpan interaction between a man and a woman. At a bus stop, the man tries on increasingly animated antics to get the woman's attention. It's half the fun to guess the context of the film. Are they a quarrelling couple? Do they even know each other? No matter, as the final conclusion can be seen as a deserved comeuppance or a sad end to a broken relationship. Cynical or romantic? It's all up to you.

Azharr Rudin has a diploma in Multimedia and is now a freelance editor (including for Amir Muhammad's two most recent documentaries) and director. He just completed a cycle of shorts called The Amber Sexology*, of which* Raining Amber *is a part.*

BERNAFAS DALAM LUMPER

DIR: JAMES LEE / 2005 / MALAYSIA / VIDEO / 18 MIN
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

This latest work from the director of *The Beautiful Washing Machine* continues with his minimalist track in this superbly acted story of a woman caught between two men. Azman, a photographer, is infatuated with the sullen Lina, but she is awaiting her husband's return from years in jail. Effused with pain and loneliness, this tripartite love affair ends just as it began – unresolved, with a quiet conclusion that speaks louder than any verbal expository can.

James Lee was born in 1973 in Ipoh, Malaysia. A self-taught filmmaker, in 2001 he directed his first fiction film Snipers*, as well as many acclaimed shorts and features. He founded Doghouse73 Pictures, an award-winning independent DV-filmmaking outfit.*

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REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 4:15PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

SUMMER OF THE SERPENT



RAISED IN THE RING



Kids Do The Darndest Things

Children grow up so fast, and sometimes we're just not ready for it when they, for the first time, appear as adults in our eyes. With this in mind, the films here reflect a mature sensitivity in the depiction of children. Whether tackling difficult subjects such as internment camps or loneliness, kids here indeed do their darndest to move, thrill and mesmerise you.

RUNNING IN TALL GRASSES

DIR: HOWARD DUY VU / 2004 / USA / 35MM / 15 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Walking along a dusty road with his mother, Little Vinh is about to see his father for the first time in years. But what should have been a happy reunion turns into a harrowing confrontation that sheds light on Vietnam's "re-education" camps in the early 1980s. Director Vu uses his own father's internment experience to draw a yet richly poignant tale of a child's shattered innocence.

Howard Duy Vu was born in Saigon, Vietnam, shortly after the city fell. He attended the USC School of Cinema-Television and now works as a producer, writer and director. Selected filmography: Forklift Local *(2002),* Running in Tall Grasses *(2004).*

SUMMER OF THE SERPENT

DIR: KIMI TAKESUE / 2004 / USA / 35MM / 27 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Eight-year-old Juliette is fascinated by two Japanese newcomers, both incongruously clad in sombre attire. Having caught the suited Koji's attention, her curiosity develops into an unlikely cross-cultural bond with surreal consequences. Winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the Brooklyn International Film Festival, this delightfully atmospheric film delivers a summer's day with all its feverish dreams of desire and tenderness intact.

Kimi Takesue is a New York-based filmmaker with a fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation. Her award-winning films include Bound *(1995),* Rosewater *(1999),* Heaven's Crossroad *(2002) and* Summer of the Serpent *(2004).*

RAISED IN THE RING

DIR: MATT MAREK / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 47 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Muay Thai, or Thai boxing, is a cultural tradition steeped in history and religious reverence. More importantly, to the rural poor, it is a career and a way to improve their livelihood. Matt Marek's eloquent and fascinating documentary reveals the lives of four aspiring kickboxers, from children aged twelve and fifteen to an eighteen-year-old vying for a professional career in Bangkok. As we follow them in their daily routines and their rigorous training regimens, we come to understand the respect and dignity with which this form of fighting is regarded in this Buddhist society.

Matt Marek is a director and cameraman with years of experience in films, television commercials, music videos and documentaries. He has worked on projects in India, Russia, Turkey, Thailand and New Zealand. Raised in the Ring *is his first film.*

MINDY

DIR: CHOR AI LENE / 2004 / USA / 35MM / 15 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Mindy is a ten-year-old weighed by responsibilities far beyond her age. Due to her mother's lack of English fluency, she must help run a Chinese restaurant while other kids run out to play. But one day, a quiet boy offers her bubblegum, and this act of generosity spurs Mindy to finally seek out a new friend. This remarkably sweet and impressively directed first feature will send you out of the theatres with a smile on your face.

Chor Ai Lene was born and raised in Malaysia. With over three years in broadcast television producing, writing and direction experience, she is now pursuing her MFA in Film and Video at Columbia College in Chicago.

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Canadian Film Centre's

REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 4:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

STATIONERY



SWEATER PEOPLE



What It Feels Like For A Grrl

"Riot grrl" is no longer a term just reserved for the likes of Courtney Love. No, it can also refer to women who refuse to yield to the status quo, the brave souls that go against the grain. Whether they succeed or not is another matter, as these six shorts can attest to. Nonetheless, the films here, mostly shot by women, reveal a sympathetic sensitivity underneath the hardened cynical exterior.

STATIONERY

DIR: MONICA RHO / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 5 MIN

In today's dog-eat-dog world, a paper clip makes all the difference if you want to get ahead in your career. Or does it? In this superbly animated short, director Monica Rho draws from everyday occurrences to express the complexity of modern life and the isolation felt in today's crowded yet withdrawn society. Sandra Oh guests as the voice of an everywoman office worker.

Monica Rho was born in South Korea and immigrated to Vancouver when she was thirteen. A graduate from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, she previously made the animated shorts Nightmare *and* Travel Travel. *She was also an animator for the National Film Board of Canada film* Roses Sing on New Snow.

SWEATER PEOPLE

DIR: NICOLE CHUNG / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 11 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

"You go, girl!" Within moments into Nicole Chung's latest short film, we're already cheering for our rambunctious Kate, the no-nonsense protagonist who proves how foolish it is to mess with an Asian grrl. But far from some gung-ho tale of heroism, *Sweater People* is a realistic portrayal of a poor university student struggling with debt, tuition fees and lovers and friends. A possible lesbian love interest can't keep Kate from spiralling into less savoury means of earning income. Can she survive despite being betrayed by everyone around her?

Nicole Chung was a finalist in the Jim Burt/Writer's Guild of Canada New Screenwriters Contest, and received a Special Jury Prize at the Immaginaria Festival in Bologna, Italy. Her previous works have screened at Reel Asian, Images Festival and Frameline San Francisco, among others.

THIN WALLS

DIR: TAIEN NG-CHAN / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 11 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

There's nothing worse than living in an apartment with zero sound proofing. Really, do you need to know every detail that goes on in your neighbours' lives? For insomniac Lil, the sound of nightly sobbing becomes more than just an irritation. And when crying turns to screams, curiosity gets the better of her …

Taien Ng-Chan is a Montreal writer and filmmaker. Apart from her published work in anthologies and journals, she is due to release her latest book, Maps of Our Bodies & the Borders We Have Agreed Upon. The Red Ribbon*, her previous film, was screened at Reel Asian last year.*

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

FACTORY THEATRE Home of the Canadian Playwright

REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 4:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

RAGE OF SILENCE



ANNIE ONG: LOST AND FOUND



What It Feels Like For A Grrl

YOU'RE DEAD AFTER SCHOOL

DIR: MISHANN LAU / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 6 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Chucky this ain't, but the Barbie-esque dolls in Mishann Lau's delectably perverse tale of schoolyard horror are still plenty creepy. A pony-tailed redhead is constantly taunted and bullied by a mean Asian girl. Soon, her playtimes with dolls will involve hanging, decapitation and even gruesome forking. Ahhhh!!!!

Mishann Lau is an award-winning sound editor who likes to take pictures and make movies in between sound jobs. Weaned on action-porno double-bills, she loves horror movies, kung-fu flicks and cheesy soft-porn. Her previous film Shaolin Sisters *was screened at Reel Asian last year.*

RAGE OF SILENCE

DIR: JUSTIN LOVELL / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 5 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Forget killing Bill – this sword-wielding assassin is ready to deliver swift retribution to those who dare to pursue her. Set in a wintry forest blanketed in snow, this black & white film is brilliantly action-packed and exquisitely choreographed. Hard to believe, but director Justin Lovell shot this 8mm film all in-camera, in sequences and with no editing.

Justin Lovell comes from a background in title design/VFX and editing. He currently operates his own super8 telecine transfer house to assist local Toronto artists. Due to his passion for filmmaking, he has embarked on his first two short features this year: Rage of Silence *and* Stuntman.

ANNIE ONG: LOST AND FOUND

DIR: JEANNETTE LOAKMAN / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 45 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

It is very rare for a documentary to spawn a sequel, but *Annie Ong: Lost and Found* follows up the story told in Jeannette Loakman's award-winning debut *The Last Seven Days of Annie Ong*, also previously shown at Reel Asian. Back then, the adopted Jeannette was looking for her birth mother in Singapore and Malaysia but had no luck finding her. Years later, she receives an email from Holland purportedly coming from her birth mother. Thus begins another journey around the world to find the truth about her adoption. The result is a truly moving portrait of love, loss and reconciliation.

Jeannette Loakman is a Toronto-based filmmaker with over ten years of experience in broadcasting and journalism. She has worked as a reporter at Citytv, a host at WTN as well as the programming associate at Vision TV. She wrote and directed Slippery Blisses, *which was invited to the Montreal World Film Festival.*

REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 7:00PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

MARNIE LOVE



DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO



Love Is A Many Splintered Thing

Face it: love sucks. Tom Cruise's newest engagement makes it look so easy, but we normal people have to worry about things like gender miscommunication, respiratory diseases, cultural gaps and even missing spouses. Ay carumba! Or, at least, that's what these filmmakers tell us anyways. But one thing we can admit is that love is never boring.

FLAMES OF PASSION

DIR: DAVID CHAI / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 2 MIN

Love burns so bright … until she extinguishes your desire like a snubbed-out cigarette. A short and pointedly wicked animation.

David Chai is the animation director for Thunderbean Animation studio and a director of animated short films. He also delves into illustrations and is a faculty member at San Jose State University's School of Arts and Design.

SASHA & FREDDIE

DIR: DAVID ENG / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 1 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Asian, Jewish, lesbian, gay, it's all muddled up anyways in this oh-so-appropriately un-PC dinner conversation! A refreshing burst of hilarity from Toronto's David Eng.

David Eng lives in Toronto and has made several short films in the multiple roles of writer, director, actor, composer and producer, including Perfect Pitch *and* Shaolin Delivery Boy. *He is a member of the fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre Company.*

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

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MARNIE LOVE

DIR: NORMAN YEUNG / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 15 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / TORONTO PREMIERE

A luscious mélange of Jean-Luc Godard and François Ozon, this suitably black & white love triangle manages to find the right balance between uncomfortable edginess and droll levity. Marnie and Philip are having a ball while getting to know each other physically … until the husband walks in. Really bad faux-pas or free love gone awry?

Norman Yeung is multi-disciplinary artist. He is known as a playwright and theatre director for the recent Pu-Erh *at SummerWorks 2005, a visual artist whose works have been exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario as well as a stage actor and film director.*

LUST IN TRANSLATION

DIR: DAVID ENG / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 1 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

A German Fräulein and a Japanese businessman walk into a bar … and we wouldn't dare to give away the punch line! Another raunchy comedic interlude from David Eng.

David Eng lives in Toronto and has made several short films in the multiple roles of writer, director, actor, composer and producer, including Perfect Pitch *and* Shaolin Delivery Boy. *He is a member of the fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre Company.*

DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO

DIR: MIKA SEIKE / 2004 / JAPAN / VIDEO / 8 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

In the animated *Dialogue Between Two*, men live on land while women are under the sea. They communicate via random objects that magically transform into eggs, fish, and ants. But when the communication breaks down, what we have left is a perfect example why gender is sometimes the hardest bridge to gap.

Mika Seike was born in 1975 and lives in Osaka, Japan. A postgraduate from the Department of Design course at Seian College of Art and Design in 1998, she has been making animated short films since 2001.

REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 7:00PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

EASTBOUND



RESPIRE



Love Is A Many Splintered Thing

MISSING

DIR: KIT HUI / 2004 / USA / 35MM / 14 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

When a person disappears from you life, all that is left are feelings of guilt and words that are unspoken. Samuel learns this the hard way when Jenn, his girlfriend, goes missing. Mournful and masterfully directed, *Missing* was officially selected in competition at Cannes Film Festival this year.

Kit Hui received her MFA from Columbia University before joining Killer Films on features such as Boys Don't Cry *as post-production assistant. She was chosen to attend the 2005 Berlinale Talent Campus for her feature script* The Flies Untitled Project.

EASTBOUND

DIR: RITA TSE / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 16 MIN

The exquisitely art-directed short film *Eastbound* is an ode to a bygone era. Highly influenced by both Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love* and Stanley Kwan's *Centre Stage*, footage of the 30's Chinese screen diva Ruan Lingyu is juxtaposed with the loneliness of the protagonist, a housewife who waits constantly for her husband's return.

Rita Tse studied Advertising and Commercial Art and worked as a graphic designer in Hong Kong. She graduated with a major in Film Studies from Simon Fraser University in 2004.

AFTERNOON

DIR: KIM SPURLOCK / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 10 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

A bravura meditation on the afterlife and the strength of family bond, this poignant and mysterious film quietly observes three generations of Vietnamese émigrés on one rainy afternoon. With meticulous pacing and atmospheric cinematography, the revelation of an unexpected guest and the purpose in her visit is quiet, sad and touching.

Kim Spurlock traces her roots to Vietnam and Appalachia. A Dean's Fellow in the graduate film programme at New York University, she worked on her debut short Fish *(2003) before completing her second film,* Afternoon.

FRESH LIKE STRAWBERRIES

DIR: DAVID AU / 2003 / USA / VIDEO / 12 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

In a hysterical outburst, Emma's husband suddenly wakes up to relieve himself of a burden he has been carrying for many years. In another surprise, her son is bringing an unexpected guest home for dinner. David Au charts the emotional contours of a mother and a wife whose only relief is through the simple and sweet pleasures in life.

David Au was born in Hong Kong but studied in the US. He now currently resides in Los Angeles and is writing a feature-length film based on Fresh Like Strawberries, *his debut short.*

RESPIRE

DIR: WI DING HO / 2005 / TAIWAN / 35MM / 15 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

In the near future, it is required by law to wear breathing masks due to continual outbreaks of a virulent respiratory disease reminiscent of SARS. A teenage girl afflicted with the cough decides to spend her final hours with a boy she desires. Respire won the Kodak Discovery Award for Best Short Film and the TV5 Young Critics Award at the 2005 Cannes Film Festival, where it also premiered.

Wi Ding Ho is a Malaysian-born Taiwanese filmmaker. He has directed many commercials, short films, documentaries and music videos. He is prepping for his feature, Lonely Together, *which will be in production next year.*

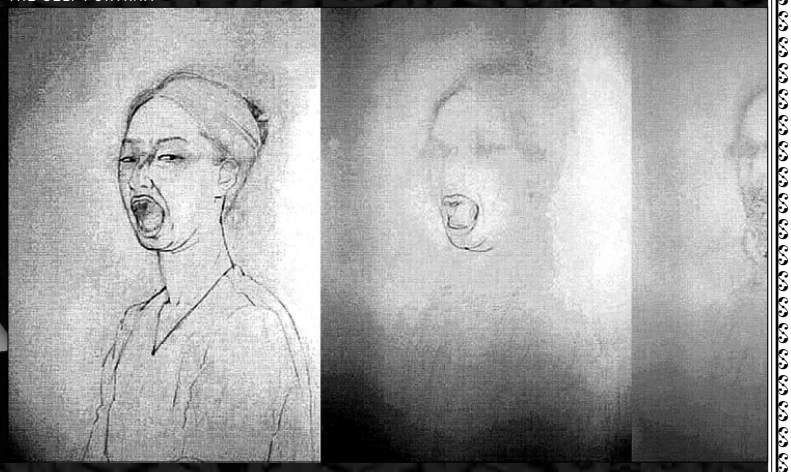
REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2:15PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

CHIASMUS



THE SELF-PORTRAIT



No Chemistry Sets Allowed

~ EXPERIMENTAL SHORTS ~

Whatever implications the term may have, an "experimental film" is not created by accident. It is a work by a filmmaker who has a clear purpose and a singular method in his self-expression. Whether through computer animation, hand-drawn sketches, digital video or film, these unusual, provocative shorts throw open the boundaries possible for filmmakers. We are proud to present a full-length programme dedicated to these innovative Asian artists.

CHASMIC DANCE

DIR: DAICHI SAITO / 2004 / CANADA / 16MM / 6 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Shiva's cosmic dance is reinterpreted as a series of rapid abstract movements, with each transformation a clash between light and darkness, creation and destruction.

CHIASMUS

DIR: DAICHI SAITO / 2003 / CANADA / 16MM / 8 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Defined as "a grammatical figure by which the order of words in one of two of parallel clauses is inverted in the other" by the Oxford English Dictionary, Chiasmus explores human perception by metaphorically juxtaposing a writhing shape with the film medium.

Daichi Saito was originally from Japan but studied philosophy in the US and Hindi and Sankrit in India. In 2000, he moved to Montreal and turned to filmmaking. He is a co-founder of Double Negative, a Montreal-based experimental filmmaking collective.

THE SELF-PORTRAIT

DIR: SONGYI KIM / 2002 / USA / VIDEO / 3 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

A series of self-portraits is drawn, erased and drawn again on the same paper since 2002. The result is a fascinating look into the ever-changing identity of an Asian woman.

Songyi Kim was born in Seoul but now lives and works in New York. Her videos deal with personal identity through low-tech digital video and have been shown in international film festivals and exhibitions.

VIETNAM, 1997

DIR: KHANHTHUAN TRAN / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 8 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Khanhthuan Tran and his family returned to Vietnam, after eighteen years of absence, to celebrate the 80th birthday of his grandmother. The resulting footage is no mere travelogue, but a way for them to reclaim themselves in a land where they once belonged.

Khanhthuan Tran was born in Vietnam but came to Canada as a child. A videographer and director, he once worked as a sushi chef. He is now writing fiction while continuing to make films.

THE TRAINS

DIR: TAKAHIRO HIRATA / 2004 / JAPAN / VIDEO / 8 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

The only thing that happens here is the passing of a train. But if you're happy with the film, and you know it, clap your hands!

SLIDE002

DIR: TAKAHIRO HIRATA / 2005 / JAPAN / VIDEO / 5 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Filmed during his visit to the Vancouver International Film Festival, this is a shot of one building elevated to a structural art form.

Takahiro Hirata was born in Nagasaki, Japan. He graduated from the Kinki University of Kyusyu Institute before enrolling in the Digital Hollywood of Visual Science course. Afterwards, he joined the Image Forum Institute of Moving Image.

COMING + GOING

DIR: LARISSA FAN / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 3 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Shot on one roll of regular film, these interrelated snapshots of bustling urban life are filmed with all editing and split-screen created in-camera.

Larissa Fan is a filmmaker, writer and arts administrator with degrees from University of Toronto and the Ontario College of Art and Design. She is currently Filmmaker Liaison at the CFMDC and pursuing an MFA in Film Production at York University.

REEL SHORTS PROGRAMME

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 2:15PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL

ORNITHOLOGY



CANNED DESPAIR



No Chemistry Sets Allowed

~ EXPERIMENTAL SHORTS ~

ORNITHOLOGY

DIR: LUO LI / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 6 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Luo Li dispenses with the Eastern influence in his previous film *Birds* to set Charlie Parker and Bennie Harris's score aflutter in this boldly imaginative and artfully orchestrated short.

Luo Li was born in China and is currently studying film production at York University. His previous shorts, Stills *and* Birds*, were shown last year at Reel Asian.*

THE WAY

DIR: QING HUANG / 2003 / AUSTRALIA / VIDEO / 8 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

The power of yin and yang combine to exert a powerful qi that flows through every living thing, from bamboo trees to goldfish. An extraordinary sight and sound created via computer graphics.

Qing Huang studied at the Fine Art College at Shanghai University. His interest is in exploring computer graphics and combining Chinese and Western ideas. He now lectures at Central Queensland University, Australia in Faculty of Informatics & Communication.

CANNED DESPAIR

DIR: CHI-WING HUNG / 2004 / HONG KONG / VIDEO / 3 MIN
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

The cyclical demand of death and consumption continues on and on in this grotesquely beautiful animation. *Canned Despair* expresses the multiplying horror of an impending disaster from ecological deterioration and warfare.

Chi-Wing Hung is a graduate of the School of Creative Media at the City University of Hong Kong. Canned Despair *was chosen as the favourite student work in a public vote campaign at the Hong Kong International Film Festival in 2005.*

TEXTISM

DIR: ISAMU HIRABAYASHI / 2003 / JAPAN / VIDEO / 11 MIN

A disembodied computerized voice narrates three instances of memento mori in this Grand Prix winner at the Image Film Forum in Japan. A masterpiece with profound emotional and philosophical impact, *TEXTISM* is a terrifying, humorous and striking rumination upon art and mortality.

Isamu Hirabayashi was born in 1972 in Shizuoka, Japan. A graduate of Musashino Art University, he has made television commercials and video art that have garnered awards worldwide. He controls all parts of the film process from photography to editing.

THE DREAMING HOUSE

DIR: KEITH LOCK / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 6 MIN
WORLD PREMIERE / DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

The filmmaker's father and youngest child walk past the tiny house in Chinatown where his father was born, triggering a sublime moment.

Keith Lock holds an MFA from York University. A founding member of Toronto Filmmaker's Co-op, he has worked as Claude Jutra's assistant and Michael Snow's cinematographer. He has directed over twenty films.

YOGA PRACTICE

DIR: HEESOO KIM / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 4 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Breathe in … breathe out. Yoga is the rage, but there are other means of huffing and puffing.

Heesoo Kim recently graduated from the Ontario College of Art and Design. She has produced various film/video pieces as well as video installation, including Let Go *(2003),* Personal Boundary *(2003),* Yoga Practice *(2004) and* Reminiscent *(2005).*

U

DIR: YURI A / 2003 / SWITZERLAND / VIDEO / 4 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

U is a scatological treatise on the symptoms of flatulence. Highly educational, it also comes with a great soundtrack. Must be seen to be believed!

Yuri A was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and currently lives in Zurich, Switzerland. She studied at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and has spent time in Vancouver, Canada, and Tokyo, Japan.

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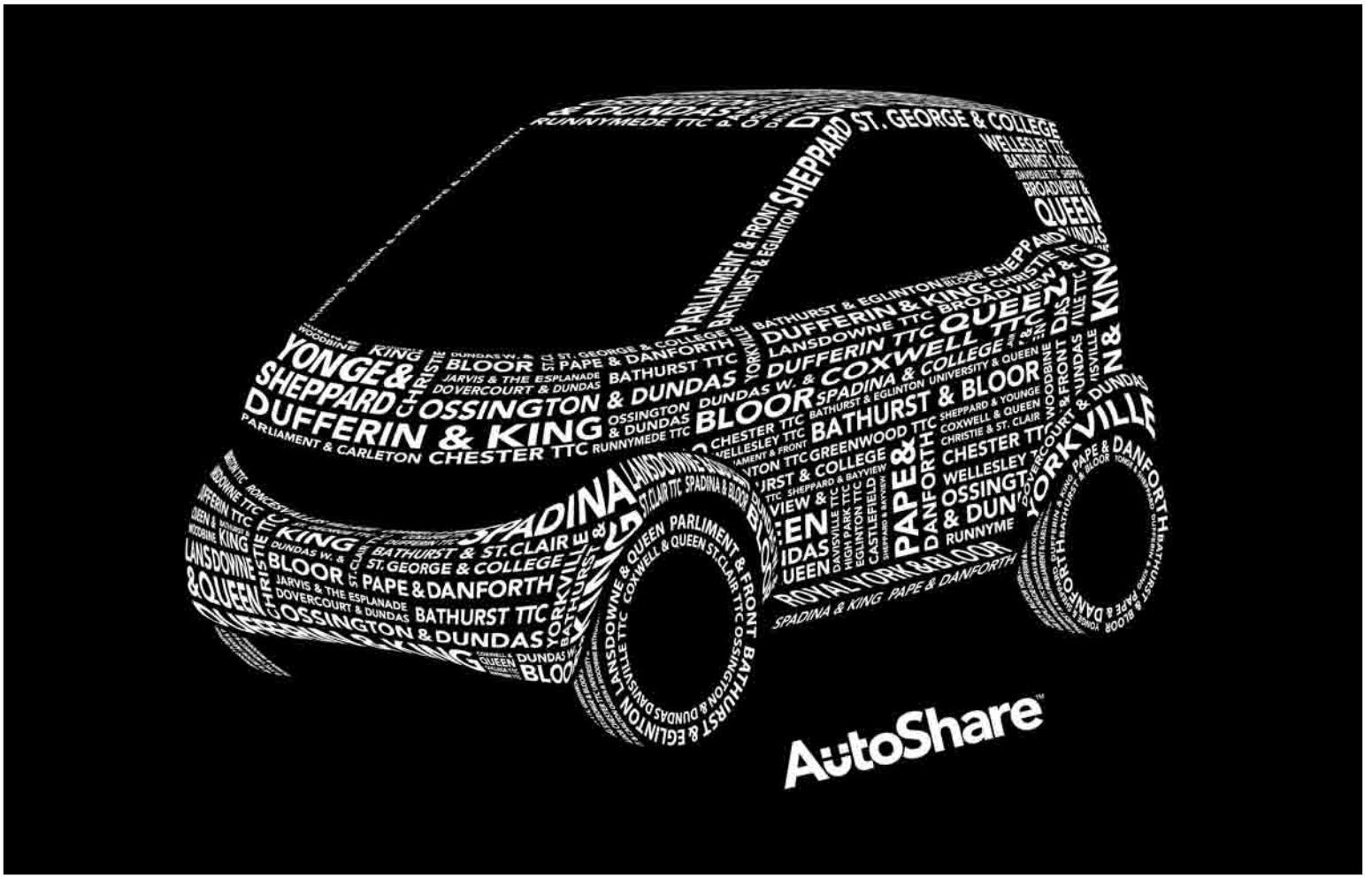
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YOUTH PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 3:45 PM AT NFB MEDIATHEQUE



Monkey Dance

MONKEY DANCE

DIR: JULIE MALLOZZI / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 65 MIN
IN ENGLISH AND KHMER WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / CANADIAN PREMIERE

From *Saturday Night Fever* to *Footloose*, dancing has always been a way for the working class to escape their repression. This is also true of the three teens featured in *Monkey Dance*, who themselves possess an incredible amount of charisma despite being neither John Travolta nor Kevin Bacon. More importantly, their dance also has much more significance – it is a way to reconnect to their culture and their past.

When the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia, they tried to extinguish all forms of art, including traditional dancing. With 90% of all practitioners executed, the rest survived by immigrating to places such as Lowell, Massachusetts, where these teens' parents settled down. Trying to keep alive their customs, they teach their art to their sons and daughters, in hopes that these values would sway them from the vices that afflict today's young teens.

Julie Mallozzi's intimately incisive and beautifully observed documentary portrays how the new immigrant generation tackles with the dichotomy of their consumerist existence in America versus their need to respect the sacrifices of their parents. Shot over nearly four years, each of the youths, Linda, Samnang and Sochenda, grows up right in front of the camera before our very eyes. Their joys, sorrows, loss and triumphs are presented to us with vivid candour. In the end, every one of them manages to find a way to make the dance their own, and it is their way of reconciling their past with their future.

"A fascinating narrative of fusion,
assimilation, and renewal – the hard inevitabilities of multiculturalism"
~ MARCIA B. SIEGEL, BOSTON PHOENIX ~



Julie Mallozzi is a documentary filmmaker based in Boston, Massachusetts. After her debut film, Once Removed*,* Monkey Dance *is her second feature. Julie studied filmmaking at Harvard University, where she currently teaches.*

PRECEDED BY:

LABO'S LAST SPIN

DIR: ALLEN TONG / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 8 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / WORLD PREMIERE

It is Toronto-based DJ Labo's last competition at the DMC World DJ Championships. All he dreams of is finally becoming world champion before retiring. Will he manage to best them all for one final shot at glory? In this documentary, local filmmaker Allen Tong follows the DJ's preparations and conversations before that fateful night ...

Allen Tong is a Toronto-based filmmaker, curator and critic. Trained at the National Film Board of Canada, he previously directed the short drama Sleepless. *He is also directing a short drama this year and developing a documentary.*

PERFECTIONS

DIR: DAVID ROWE / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 4 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

We've all been through it – bored in class, dying to get out of school to do what you really love. This perfect slice of high school life shows the escapism that every teen longs for.

David Rowe is a graduate of the Seattle Film Institute. He has made several short films, and is a member of Infinite Quest Productions, a film and stunt team.

THE DAY THE BUFFALO ESCAPED

DIR: MADÉVI DAILLY / 2004 / UK / VIDEO / 6 MIN

This heartbreaking animation follows a young Cambodian farm girl and her imaginary water buffalo friend. Though teased and harassed, she is given guidance by a wise monk … until the day the Khmer Rouge arrives at her village.

Madévi Dailly studied animation at Edinburgh College of Art. Since completing The Day the Buffalo Escaped*, Madévi has been working freelance as an animator and is currently employed as a producer at Red Kite Animations.*

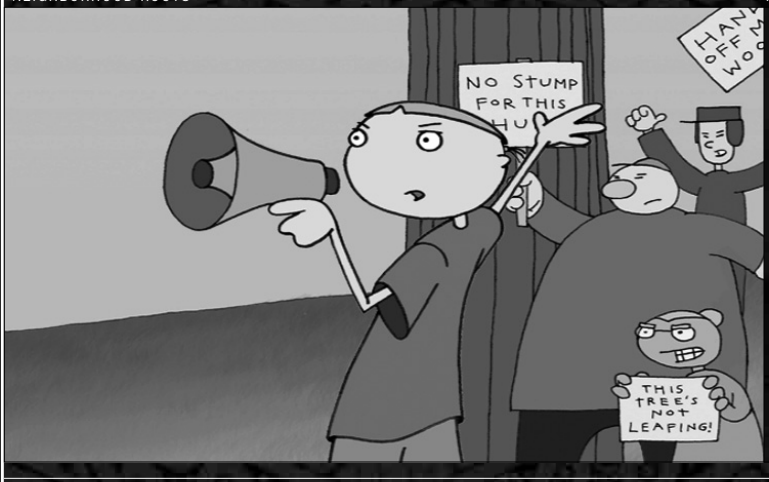
COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

MEDIA SPONSOR

YOUTH PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2:00PM AT NFB MEDIATHEQUE

NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS



TOP SHELF



Cop An Attitude?

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

Goody two-shoes Asians are a stereotype of the past. These directors have created animated, live-action and documentary films that are full of spunk and attitude! From brooding, mercurial young men to women with fiery temperament, this compilation of shorts will leave you laughing, startled and thought-provoked.

NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS

DIR: DAVID CHAI / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 2 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Environmental activists get their comeuppance in the form of an arboreal retribution. Animator David Chai skewers both the callous loggers and the tree-huggers in one fell swoop.

David Chai is the animation director for Thunderbean Animation studio and a director of animated short films. He also delves into illustrations and is a faculty member at San Jose State University's School of Arts and Design.

TOP SHELF

DIR: MARTA TESORO / 2004 / AUSTRALIA / VIDEO / 6 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Superbrat Abigail goes on a rampage in a toy store. But why is there someone in a bunny suit? And why is the toy store owner so strange? Beautifully rendered and animated, this film from Down Under is not afraid to delve into the dark side of childhood.

Marta Tesoro graduated from Australia's Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University and now runs Rabbit Town Productions, a company that works on animated sequences for commercials, pilots and others. Her previous works include The Ball *and* Perftech.

MEDIA SPONSOR



YOUTH PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 2:00PM AT NFB MEDIATHEQUE

FRAGILE



BROKEN ROOTS



Cop An Attitude?

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

FRAGILE

DIR: EUN-KYUNG KIM / 2004 / SOUTH KOREA / 35MM / 16 MIN
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Su-yeon is a shy highschooler whose best friend, Eun-hye, is in love with a boy. Pushed into writing and couriering love letters, Su-yeon is about to discover the price of betrayal and face a hidden violence beneath the schoolboy uniforms … Impeccably directed, this great Korean short reveals the pains of growing up in increasingly rough school environments.

Eun-kyung Kim was born in 1978 in Seoul, South Korea. A graduate of Sang Myung University from the Department of Film Making and Study, she has made the shorts My Bra *(1999),* Blink *(2000) and* A Music Box *(2001) before completing* Fragile.

HEART ON FIRE

DIR: YORICO MURAKAMI / 2005 / USA / VIDEO / 8 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Ah, love. It's so romantic, so wonderful, so … hot. In fact, for our young protagonist, her love burns so deep inside of her that it's ready to explode! A skilfully animated stop-motion short by a former graphic designer, the art direction alone reveals the amount of care put into making this film.

Yorico Murakami majored in Craft Arts at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and is currently enrolled in the University of Southern California. Heart on Fire *follows up* Elevator*, her debut animated film.*

BROKEN ROOTS

DIR: SUSAN CHANG / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 47 MIN

David Ricketts is not like most other teens. For one, he was diagnosed with Tourettes. Then came his other symptoms: bipolar, obsessive compulsive and attention deficit disorders.

What turned a once happy and content child into a depressed, angry and self-destructive young man? His parents begin to wonder if it is because David was adopted. Born Jong Hoon in South Korea, David feels alienated from his Caucasian parents, even though his other siblings are also Korean and adopted.

The documentary *Broken Roots* charts the Ricketts' attempt to reunite David with his birth parents in Korea. It encapsulates the modern problems of adoption along with a moving tale that shows David's difficult transition to an adult. Susan Chang's directorial debut is full of revelations, yet doesn't try to simplify or solve the issues at hand.

Susan Chang is a veteran television broadcaster who has anchored, reported and produced for CNN International, BBC World Service TV, Hong Kong TVB, CBC TV and CTV in Canada.

YOUTH PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2:00PM AT NFB MEDIATHEQUE

WHAT ARE YOU ANYWAYS?



SOMETHING OTHER THAN OTHER



Let Me Be Me

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

For today's youths, issues of race, religion, class and sexual orientation have made finding themselves much harder. Can't they be left alone to be who they want to be? With an energetic dose of comedy, pathos and insight, this is precisely the message these Asian filmmakers want to deliver.

WHAT ARE YOU ANYWAYS?

DIR: JEFF CHIBA STEARNS / 2005 / CANADA / VIDEO / 11 MIN
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / TORONTO PREMIERE

Is he Latin? First Nations? No! He's Super Nip, the superhero alter-ego from the imaginations of Jeff Stearns. Growing up in a small Canadian town, Jeff grew tired of the endless taunting since his childhood due to his Japanese-Caucasian parentage. But being of mixed race is not so bad either, as Stearns has created a warm, funny and observant animation of how he overcame his prejudices to recognise the virtues of his own background.

Jeff Chiba Stearns is a Vancouver/Kelowna based animator and illustrator. A graduate from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and University of British Columbia, he made Kip and Kyle *and* The Horror of Kindergarten *before* What Are You Anyways?

A BAD HAIR DAY

DIR: MEESOO LEE / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 8 MIN

A particularly inspiring type of amateur filmmaking, Meesoo Lee's work captures an argument between himself and his parents at a barbershop all through a tiny handheld camera. But don't let the jerky motions and indistinct sound in this purposefully amateurish production deter you. This is a wonderful satire that uproariously captures parents-son relationship with uncanny perceptivity. After all, who hasn't experienced similar ordeals with his or her own mother and father? It goes to show how good filmmaking only needs a minimum of tools but a lot of good, intuitive judgement.

Meesoo Lee started making short videos using a camcorder and 2 VCRs, inspired by the DIY ethos of 'zines, "lo-fi" music and underground cinema. His work has been shown at the Western Front and Images Festival Toronto.

SOMETHING OTHER THAN OTHER

DIR: ANDREA CHIA, JERRY HENRY / 2005 / USA / VIDEO / 7 MIN
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Here's a dilemma: newborn Quin Henry-Chia has at least three ethnicities mixed in his blood. Exactly where should his parents, Andrea Chia and Jerry Henry, check his name off in the "race" category? In today's increasingly multi-ethnic world, is there even a need for such easy racial classification? A humorous and revealing documentary that also features one adorable baby.

Andrea Chia and Jerry Henry are husband and wife. They worked together on the feature-length documentary Brazilintime *(2005), which Chia produced and Henry shot and edited. Jerry Henry is now shooting a video diary of Sam Mendes' film* Jarhead.

DASTAAR: DEFENDING SIKH IDENTITY

DIR: KEVIN LEE / 2005 / USA / VIDEO / 13 MIN

After 9/11, one of the most maligned minorities in the US were the Sikhs. Due to their turban, the dastaar, which people mistake to be the equivalent of those worn by terrorists such as Osama bin Laden, they have faced discrimination and violence. Kevin Lee's empathetic documentary delves into the origins of Sikhism while showing how a minority rises against all odds to triumph against ignorance and prejudice.

Kevin Lee is a filmmaker based in New York. He is a 2004 Berlin Film Festival's Berlinale Talent Campus and IFP Project Involve honoree. Kevin is currently filming a feature documentary about Sikhism.

YOUTH PROGRAMME

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 2:00PM AT NFB MEDIATHEQUE

INNOCENT



ARNOLD MORENO = π



Let Me Be Me

~ SHORTS PROGRAMME ~

INNOCENT

DIR: CLIFF KAFAI MOK / 2004 / CANADA / VIDEO / 6 MIN

A lucidly frightful examination of Catholic repression, this animated short starts off idyllically with two boys meeting and falling in love. But as religious guilt rears its head, Cliff Kafai Mok splendidly uses Christian iconography to represent the inner thoughts of the boy and his conflicts.

Cliff Kafai Mok was born in Hong Kong. He thought he was going to Milan for fashion design but ended up in Vancouver to do art. He is now back in Hong Kong where he grew up, neither Chinese, British nor Canadian.

YELLOW BROTHERHOOD

DIR: TADASHI NAKAMURA / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 18 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

As a kid, Tadashi Nakamura played in a basketball team called the Venice YB. But the true significance of the group did not come to him until much later, when he found out that YB stands for Yellow Brotherhood, a self-help community formed by an Asian-American biker gang in the 1960s. Through this close-knit association, he found life-long friends and realised the group's legacy and impact in helping to serve people within the community. With never-before-seen footage of Los Angeles' Japanese American community, this is a fascinating documentary that records the evolution of a minority in the past four decades.

Tadashi Nakamura graduated from UCLA and is the Community Projects Coordinator of UCLA's Centre for EthnoCommunications. His previous films included The Dream *(2002),* Things Need to Change: A Portrait of P-Town *(2002) and* March Rain *(2003).*

ARNOLD MORENO = π

DIR: RYAN MASAAKI YOKOTA, HUY CHHENG, ANJALI NATH, LONG TRINH
2005 / USA / VIDEO / 18 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

Arnold Moreno = π is a tremendously moving documentary that highlights one Salvadoran youth's involvement with the Filipino community of Echo Park, Los Angeles. More than just a chronicle of inner city poverty, the film is also an indictment of the failed healthcare system in the US. Using archival footage and interviews with friends and family members, it raises timely questions for the millions of Americans who remain uninsured. Parallels can also be drawn between Canada's own recent move towards privatising its healthcare.

Ryan Masaaki Yokota is a longtime community activist in Los Angeles, having served as Media Director for the Asian Pacific Legal Center. He has worked in various film projects, having co-produced and written an episode of UCLA: NEXT.

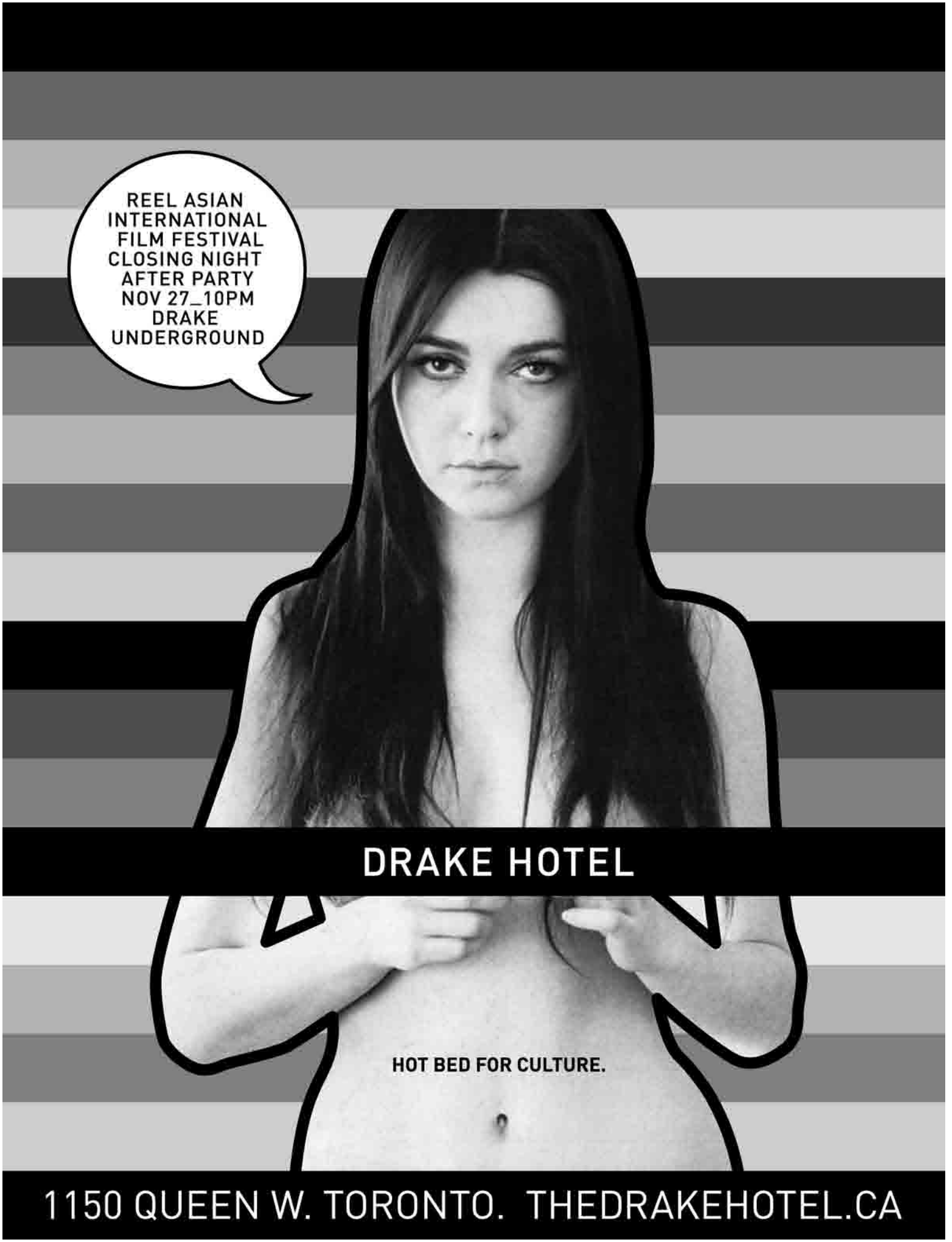
Huy Chheng is a graduate of UCLA with a Master's in Asian American Studies. Her previous films include Sweet & Sour *and* Obsessed*, a feature-length thriller.*

Anjali Nath is also a Master's graduate in Asian American Studies from UCLA. Through her contacts and research, she helped to develop the healthcare aspects of the film.

Long Trinh was born in Vietnam but came to the US as a refugee. An undergraduate from UC Berkeley, he is completing his Asian American Studies at UCLA.

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FEATURE PRESENTATION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 6:30PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



Happy Family

HAPPY FAMILY

DIR: HEESOOK SOHN / 2004 / GERMANY/USA / VIDEO / 67 MIN
IN ENGLISH AND KOREAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
CANADIAN PREMIERE

Is this another lost-in-transition tale of Asian immigrants? Not even close. Heesook Sohn's directorial debut, *Happy Family,* is a rare gem – a simultaneously hilarious and painful portrait of her own fractured family that makes the Addams Family look like the Huxtables.

At the heart of the film is the patriarch – her father, Younghyn. He is both the centre of the family and also the film's comedic soul. Some of the funniest moments come from just observing the man himself sleeping or golfing in his own home. Though these events sound mundane, but the resulting effect is one of sheer deadpan slapstick.

But beyond the bizarre antics of this man lies a host of inner turmoil, from adultery to illness and estrangement. Having moved with Heesook to the US and abandoning his wife and two other children in South Korea, he built a successful career while his marriage slowly disintegrated. The three children, in turn, are affected by the separation and the very different environments in which they grew up in.

Straddling no less than three continents, Heesook Sohn chronicles a family struggling to reconcile their past while overcoming both geographical and emotional rifts. It is a bold, fascinating and affecting portrait of the Asian diaspora in the 21st century.



Heesook Sohn was born in 1969 in Seoul, Korea. She immigrated to Los Angeles in 1980 but now lives in Berlin, Germany. She studied art at the School of Visual Arts, New York and directing at the dffb, German Film- and TV Academy, Berlin. Before her feature film debut Happy Family*, she has made a succession of shorts such as* Lost and Found *(1996),* Ich liebe dich *(1997),* 4:00 AM *(1998),* Bunte Wäsche *(1999) and* Fate in C Minor *(2001). Her next feature is* Porno!Melo!Drama!*, currently in production.*

PRECEDED BY:

SHERRY, LIKE THE DRINK

DIR: JONATHAN NG / 2003 / CANADA / VIDEO / 3 MIN

A charming animated film, narrated by a rhyme, that celebrates the life of Sherry Ng. The title comes from a catch phrase that she used when she introduced herself to people.

Jonathan Ng graduated from Classical Animation at Sheridan College and from 3D Animation at Seneca College. He is now with NFB Animation Studio in Montreal finishing his first professional animated film, Asthma Tech.

POL POT'S BIRTHDAY

DIR: TALMAGE COOLEY / 2004 / USA / VIDEO / 10 MIN
TORONTO PREMIERE

It's the notorious Khmer Rouge dictator's birthday. How will he and his closest henchmen celebrate? Believe us: the result is sheer deadpan drollery!

Talmage Cooley is a writer, producer and director. Pol Pot's Birthday *is his first short while his second,* Dimmer*, was shown at Worldwide Short Film Festival in 2005. He is now working on several feature films.*

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FEATURE PRESENTATION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 6:45PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



The Grace Lee Project

THE GRACE LEE PROJECT

DIR: GRACE LEE / 2004 / USA/SOUTH / KOREA / VIDEO / 68 MIN
IN ENGLISH
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / CANADIAN PREMIERE

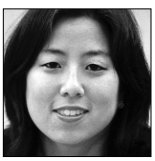
She is a quiet, attractive, smart and hard-working Asian woman from a Christian family. Ambitious yet dutiful to her parents, she is now out there in the world, succeeding in whatever she sets her mind to. Too bad you never really knew her. Chances are, too, that her name is Grace Lee.

Grace Lee is the Asian equivalent of Jane Smith – with all the stereotypical baggage that goes alone with it. Everyone who knows her describes her as the consummate Asian girl. But why then is she so unmemorable, despite her myriad of accomplishments and her hyper-achieving ways? It was up to one filmmaker, another Grace Lee, to find out.

Borne out of curiosity and frustration over her own name, this very different Grace Lee decided to embark upon an ambitious project to contact and be contacted by as many Grace Lees as possible. After years of research and hundreds of hours of footage, the result is *The Grace Lee Project* – an insightful, though-provoking and often hilarious documentary that delves into the identity, ethnicity and cultural expectation of the Asian woman in North America.

From a gifted teenager living in Silicon Valley to an 88 year-old activist who champions the rights of African-Americans, we come to realise the wealth of uniqueness among the Grace Lees, as well as the qualities that they all share. It then comes as no surprise that there is a little of Grace Lee within all of us. Winner: Emerging Director, New York Asian-American Film Festival.

"a funny but complex meditation
on identity, ethnicity and cultural expectations"
~ DENNIS HARVEY, VARIETY ~



Grace Lee is a writer/director currently based in Los Angeles. An MFA graduate from UCLA's Film School, her thesis film starring Sandra Oh, Barrier Device*, garnered a Student Academy Award and a Directors Guild of America Student Award in 2002. She is currently preparing her narrative feature film debut,* Smells Like Butter*, also starring Oh.*

PRECEDED BY:

RED MANICURE

DIR: JI-YEON KWON / 2004 / SOUTH KOREA / 35MM / 22 MIN
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Once a country girl, always a country girl. One young woman struggles with her provincial mannerisms, while her visiting mother is lost among the hustle and bustle of Seoul. Will they find each other, or will the disparity between their lives keep them apart?

Ji-yeon Kwon was born in 1976 in Seoul, South Korea. Her previous films include Elegy *(2000),* Plot *(2002) and* Picnic in Dream *(2004). She graduated from the Russian State Institute of Cinematography in Moscow and attended the Korean National University of Arts.*

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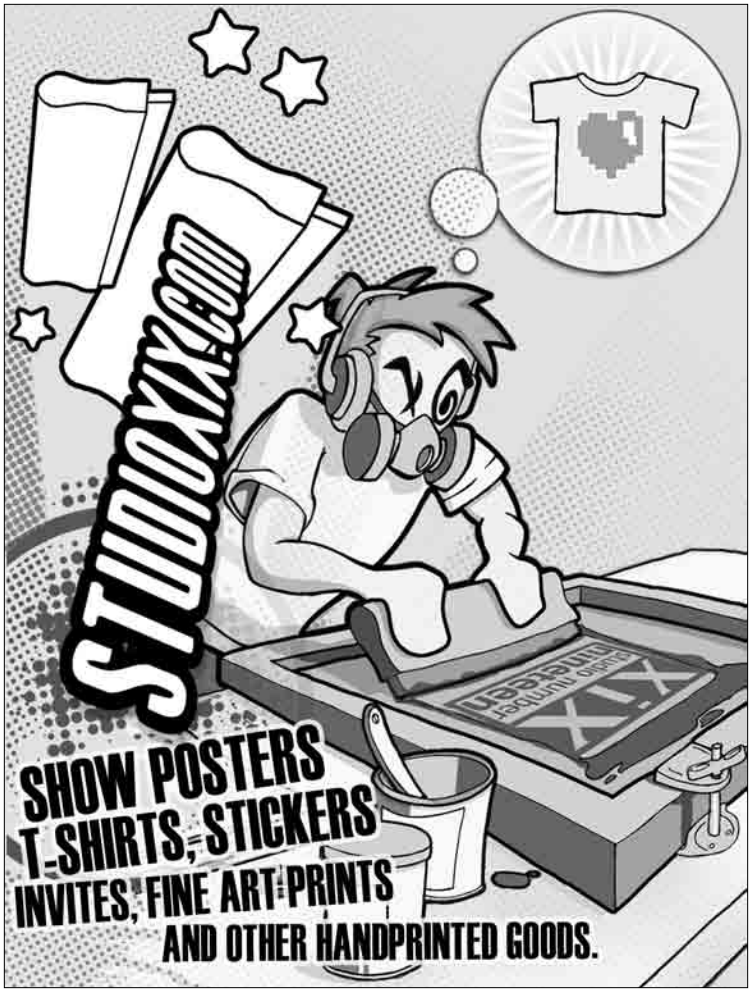
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FEATURE PRESENTATION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 9:00PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL



Cavite

CAVITE

DIR: NEILL DELA LLANA, IAN GAMAZON
2005 / USA/THE PHILIPPINES / VIDEO / 80 MIN
IN ENGLISH AND TAGALOG WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE / TORONTO PREMIERE

Adam, a naturalised Filipino-American on his way to attend his father's funeral in Manila, is about to get a welcome home he'll never forget. It starts with a mysterious caller on his cell phone. Before long, he is forced to witness the reality of his home country, from the living conditions in the filthiest slums to the religious extremism that puts his very life at risk.

Cavite is a nail-biting rollercoaster ride of a thriller that takes the war on terror to a wholly personal level. Winner of the Special Jury Award at both the South by Southwest and San Francisco Asian-American Film Festival, it already has critics raving, with Kirk Honeycutt from *The Hollywood Reporter* calling it "guerrilla filmmaking at its finest."

Directors Ian Gamazon and Neill dela Llana have declared war on traditional filmmaking with tactics straight out of the embedded journalists' rulebook. With what *Variety*'s Robert Koehler calls "a gutsy, athletic filmmaking package that shows what can be done with a minimum of tools," this two-man band has crafted one of the most exciting and truly independent features this year. Using a hand-held camera that lends realism to the relentless intensity of Adam's unwinnable dilemma, this indie film has made the socio-political juxtaposition of extreme poverty and multinational globalisation so pristinely urgent and clear. *Cavite* is an all too timely look at a problem that no one has been able to solve: is there truly a way to win against terrorism?

"A button-pushing thriller… fresh and compelling to the end"
~ KEVIN CRUST, LA TIMES ~



NEILL DELA LLANA


IAN GAMAZON

Neill dela Llana and Ian Gamazon worked on their first film together with 1998's The Book, *with Ian as the lead actor and Neill with his directorial debut. Prior to this, Ian also wrote, produced and starred in his directorial debut* Diego Stories *in 1996. After directing his second feature, 2001's* Freud's 2nd Law, *Ian reteamed with Neill to complete* Cavite, *their most critically acclaimed work to date.*

PRECEDED BY:

BALIKBAYAN

DIR: LARILYN SANCHEZ, RIZA MANALO / 2003 / USA / VIDEO / 5 MIN

A woman's face is all we see… as we hear of all the gifts sent over by a relative working overseas. Translated as "Homebound" in English, *Balikbayan* is a touching, sad and shocking tale that explores the effect of globalised consumerism on developing countries.

Larilyn Sanchez is an award-winning filmmaker based in New York City. Her videos have been shown in several festivals and galleries in the US, Europe and Asia.

Riza Manalo is an artist and an award-winning filmmaker based in New York City. She has been exhibiting since 1994, and had several solo exhibitions.

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CLOSING NIGHT GALA

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 9:00PM AT THE ROYAL



Kekexili: Mountain Patrol

KEKEXILI: MOUNTAIN PATROL

DIR: LU CHUAN / 2004 / CHINA / 35MM / 90 MIN
IN MANDARIN AND TIBETAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
TORONTO PREMIERE

Across the cold, deserted plateau of Tibet known as Kekexili, a rare breed of antelopes known as the chinu lived and thrived… until poachers arrived in the 1980s and began hunting them en masse. Soon, the chinu were endangered, and attempts to outlaw the hunting failed, as their pelts fetched a handsome price in the black market.

Based upon actual events, *Kekexili: Mountain Patrol* chronicles the travails of a ragtag group of Tibetan mountain patrols that volunteered to stop the illegal poaching. In 1993, a Beijing photojournalist was assigned to follow one such band, and his subsequent account caused a sensation throughout China, eventually leading to the government declaring the whole area a protected zone. His tale became the story depicted in the film.

Winner of the Golden Horse for Best Picture and the Special Jury Prize at the Tokyo Film Festival, this moving yet harrowing motion picture is the most progressive portrayal of Tibetans yet from China. Stoic and dignified yet not without their flaws, these men (acted by non-professionals) are as empathetic as they are benevolent in their cause. Amid stunning cinematography of some of nature's most rugged terrain, the film shows how one group is willing to protect their way of life at all costs, risking perhaps even their own lives.

An ecological rallying cry seldom seen in today's rapidly industrialising China, *Kekexili* is even rarer in that there are no true villains, just people driven to evil deeds by desperation and the need for self-preservation.

"Exquisite to behold and with a stimulating storyline that mixes guns with ecological consciousness"
~ RUSSELL EDWARDS, VARIETY ~



Lu Chuan was born in Nanjing, China in 1971. He graduated from the Beijing Film Academy with a Master of Arts degree before working as a screenwriter for China Central TV's drama series, Black Hole. *In 2001, he made his first film,* The Missing Gun. Kekexili: Mountain Patrol *(2004) is his second feature.*

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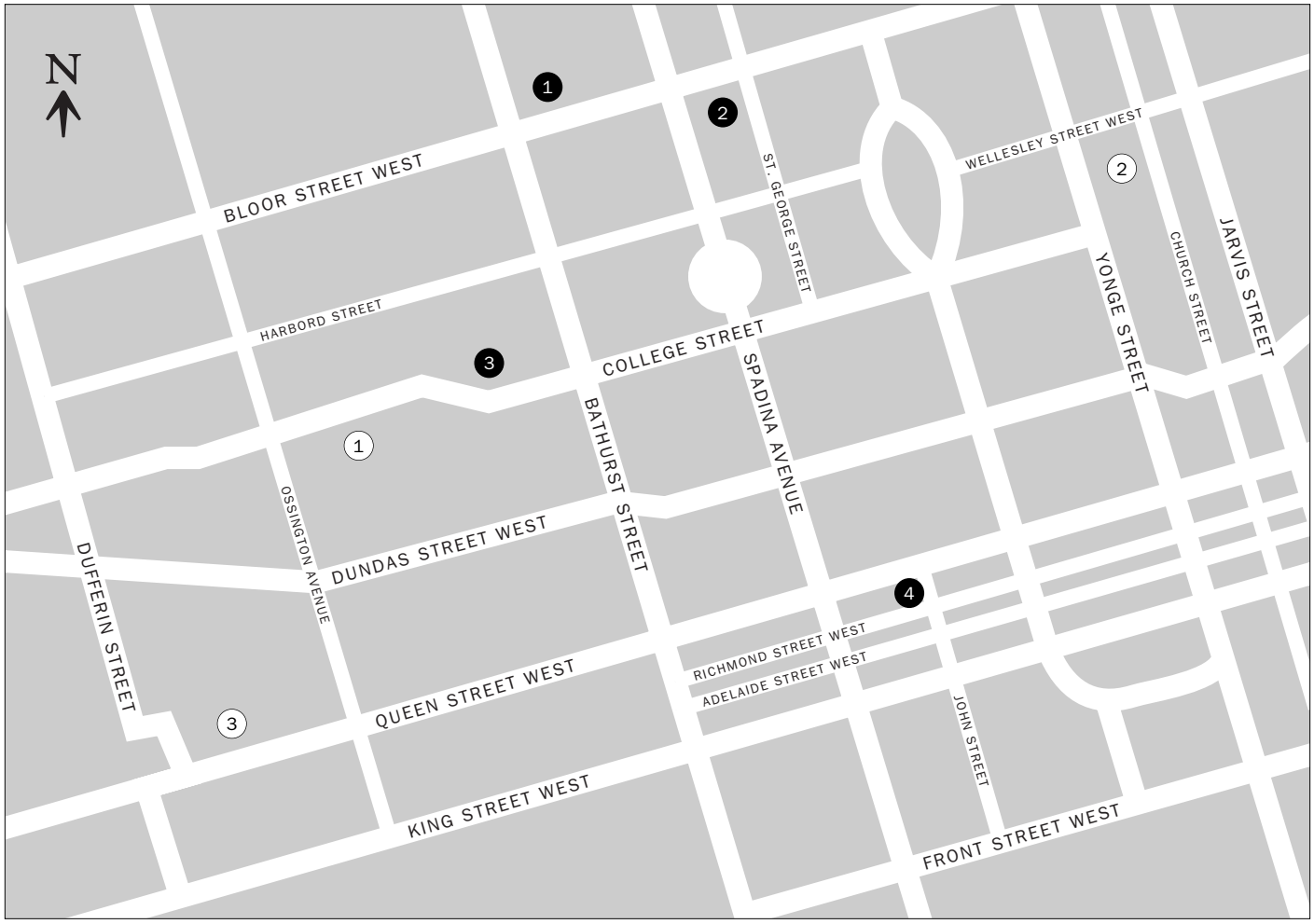
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Venues



FILM SCREENINGS

1 BLOOR CINEMA
506 Bloor Street West
(east of Bathurst)

2 INNIS TOWN HALL
2 Sussex Avenue
(at St. George, south of Bloor)

3 THE ROYAL
606 College Street
(west of Clinton)

4 NFB MEDIATHEQUE
150 John Street
(at Richmond)

PARTIES

1 REVIVAL
783 College Street
(at Shaw)

2 LÜB LOUNGE
487 Church Street
(south of Wellesley)

3 THE DRAKE HOTEL
1150 Queen Street West
(at Beaconsfield)

Film Festival Schedule

WEDNESDAY, NOV 23

7:00PM
Opening Gala
THE MOTEL
Bloor Cinema

FOLLOWED BY
9:00PM
OPENING NIGHT GALA PARTY
Revival

THURSDAY, NOV 24

2:00PM
Youth Programme
LET ME BE ME
NFB Mediatheque

6:00PM
National Spotlight: Malaysia
THE BEAUTIFUL WASHING MACHINE
Innis Town Hall

8:30PM
Canadian Artist Spotlight
INNOCENT
Innis Town Hall

FOLLOWED BY
10:00PM
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT AFTER-PARTY
lüb lounge

FRIDAY, NOV 25

2:00PM
Youth Programme
COP AN ATTITUDE?
NFB Mediatheque

3:45PM
Youth Programme
MONKEY DANCE
NFB Mediatheque

6:30PM
Feature Presentation
HAPPY FAMILY
Innis Town Hall

8:30PM
National Spotlight: Malaysia
THE GRAVEL ROAD
Innis Town Hall

SATURDAY, NOV 26

11:00AM
Industry Panel
LIVING HERE, SHOOTING THERE
Innis Town Hall

12:30PM
Canadian Artist Spotlight
OF LOVE AND MINORITIES
Innis Town Hall

2:30PM
National Spotlight: Malaysia
THE BIG DURIAN
Innis Town Hall

4:30PM
Reel Shorts Programme
WHAT IT FEELS LIKE FOR A GRRL
Innis Town Hall

6:45PM
Feature Presentation
THE GRACE LEE PROJECT
Innis Town Hall

9:00PM
Feature Presentation
CAVITE
Innis Town Hall

SUNDAY, NOV 27

11:00AM
Industry Panel
THE REALITY OF DV FILMMAKING
Innis Town Hall

12:30PM
National Spotlight: Malaysia
MALAYSIAN DELUXE PLATTER
Innis Town Hall

2:15PM
Reel Shorts Programme
NO CHEMISTRY SETS ALLOWED
Innis Town Hall

4:15PM
Reel Shorts Programme
KIDS DO THE DARNDEST THINGS
Innis Town Hall

7:00PM
Reel Shorts Programme
LOVE IS A MANY SPLINTERED THING
Innis Town Hall

9:00PM
Closing Gala
KEKEXILI: MOUNTAIN PATROL
The Royal

FOLLOWED BY
10:00PM
CLOSING NIGHT GALA PARTY AND AWARDS CEREMONY
The Drake Hotel

Tickets

TICKETS

All tickets $9 except as follows:
Opening Night Gala (screening and party) $15
Opening Night Party Only $10
Youth Programmes $5
Industry Panels . . . . . FREE
Closing Night Party . . . . . FREE*
(with Closing Night ticket stub, $3 for party only; pay at the door)*

Limited number of five-screening passes available for purchase only at the screening venues for $35 (access to any 5 screenings, except Opening Night).

Tickets for *all* screenings, including Opening Night Gala, can be purchased 30 minutes before start time at venue box office.

Advance tickets* available through Festival Ticketing:

IN PERSON
Manulife Centre
55 Bloor Street West

BY PHONE
416.967.1528

ON LINE
Please go to www.reelasian.com, then click on "Tickets and Venues".

*ADVANCE TICKETS SUBJECT TO APPLICABLE SERVICE CHARGES.

Venues

SCREENINGS

Bloor Cinema
506 Bloor Street West (east of Bathurst)

The Royal
606 College Street (west of Clinton)

Innis Town Hall
2 Sussex Avenue (at St. George, south of Bloor)

NFB Mediatheque
150 John Street (at Richmond)

PARTIES

Revival
783 College Street (at Shaw)

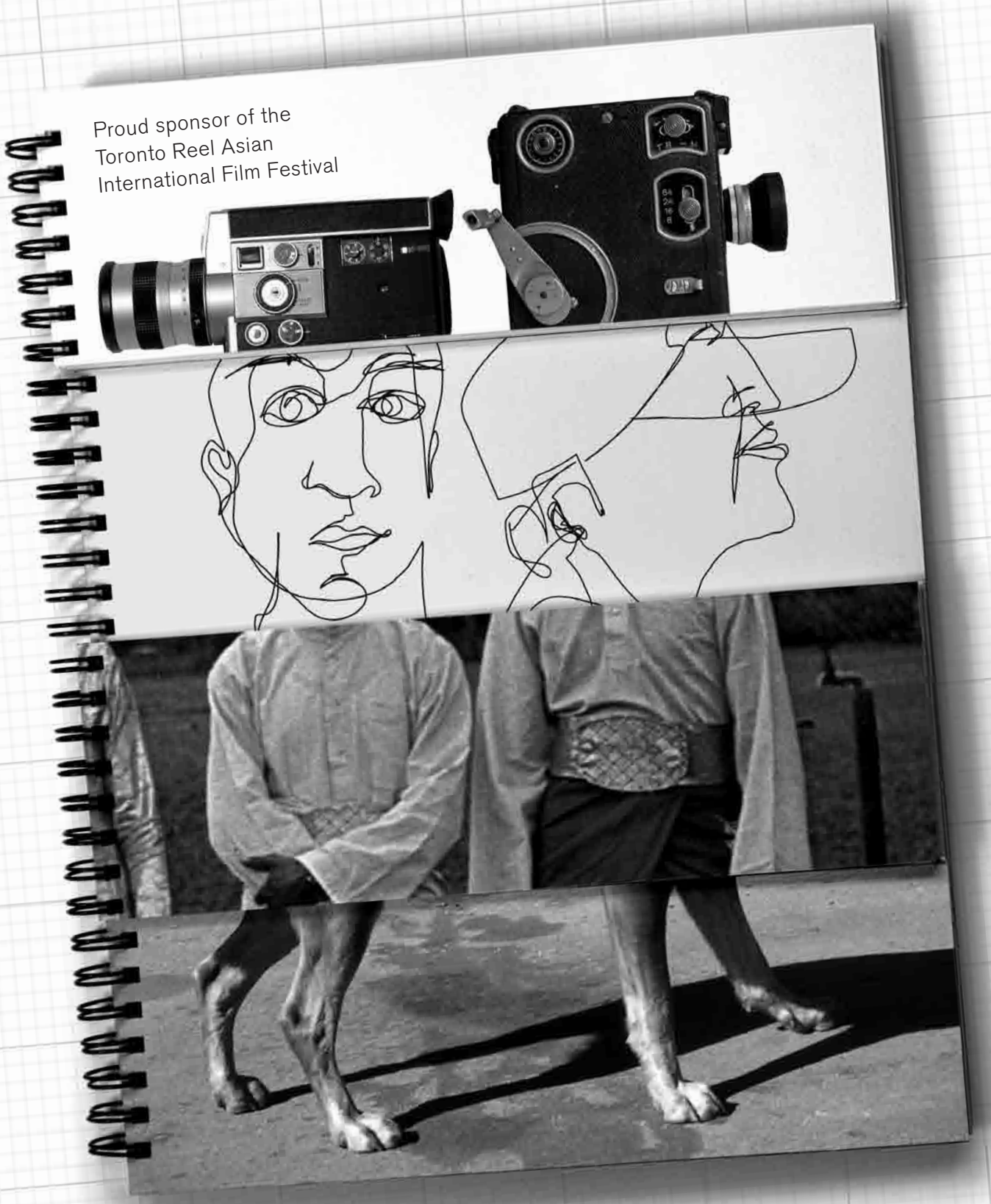
lüb lounge
487 Church Street (south of Wellesley)

The Drake Hotel
1150 Queen Street West (at Beaconsfield)

ADMITTANCE TO ALL SCREENINGS EXCEPT FOR MATINEE NFB YOUTH SCREENINGS ARE RESTRICTED TO THOSE 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER. REEL ASIAN BELIEVES IN FREEDOM OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION, BUT UNDER THE ONTARIO THEATRES ACT, FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVALS ARE REQUIRED TO ADOPT A BLANKET ADULT RATING IN ORDER TO HOLD PUBLIC SCREENINGS WITHOUT HAVING TO SUBMIT ALL WORKS FOR PRIOR CLASSIFICATION. FILM AND VIDEO ARE THE ONLY FORMS OF EXPRESSION SUBJECT TO THIS KIND OF CENSORSHIP SYSTEM IN ONTARIO. REEL ASIAN COMPLIES WITH THE ONTARIO THEATRES ACT UNDER PROTEST.

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