

May 5, 2010

It Gets Personal at The 3rd New Asia Film Festival

Cutting-edge Films Explore the Inner Landscape of Contemporary Asian Culture

Richmond, BC – May 4th, 2010 – Co-presented by the City of Richmond and Cinevolution Media Arts Society, New Asia Film Festival is the leading international film event in Richmond. Its third annual festival will be taking place from May 27-30th at the Richmond Cultural Centre.

Growing from a small community film showcase to its present scale, the New Asia Film Festival has always endeavoured to present films that dare to tackle sensitive topics and challenge stereotypical images and conventional ideas. This year, a unique selection of 28 films from around the world will explore the streams of art and spirituality, and reveal audiences the inner landscape of contemporary Asian culture.

“We belong to a generation of new immigrants from the Asia that has already been under the influence of globalization. As a result, we are less limited within the issue of cultural identity, and we can reach out and care about more universal topics,” explains Ying Wang, the Festival Director and chair of Cinevolution Media Arts Society.

Cutting-edge Films

This year’s 28 handpicked films being screened come from Hong Kong, China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Philippines, France, UK, Germany, Italy, as well as Canada. Ranging from documentary, fiction, to animation and short experimental, many films have their Canadian premieres or Vancouver premieres. These films are engaging and relevant in their subject matter and innovative and diverse in their style. They are either made by Asians from around the globe or by non-Asian filmmakers interested in Asian-related experiences. The main thread of the line-up is the examination of the relationship between our inner and outside world, and between art and life.

Being acclaimed as a “surprising achievement” at the 46th Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival in 2009, the festival opener *KJ: Life & Music* presents a rare sensitive portrait of a Hong Kong music prodigy who is struggling with demands of his own talent and questions of the meaning of life. The closing film, *7 Days in Slow Motion*, is an unusual new Indian drama about a boy’s rebellious adventure of making a film in 7 days; *Talentine*, an unforgettable interracial story made by the late Malaysian filmmaker Yasmin Ahmad, one of the most important figures in the Malaysian new

cinema; *We Don't Care About Music Anyways...*, a super cool French made documentary about Tokyo's avant-garde music scene; and *Of Anna and Dreams*, an artistic portrait of the internal world of Anna May Wong, the first famous Asian American movie actress. The film was made by someone who is no stranger to Vancouver, Zhang O, whose large scale photo series *Horizon* has been exhibited in downtown.

The festival line-up is not short of hard-hitting serious topics. We are proud to present the world premiere of *Shangshu Academy Witness*, a film that, for the first time, exposes the life of ordinary Chinese Catholics and the mentality of common people from the post-Sichuan earthquake area; South Korean film *Iron Crows*, the Best Mid-length Documentary winner of the 2009 Amsterdam International Film Festival, tells a heat-breaking story of a group of young workers' lives on the Chittagong ship deck; and a short Philippines documentary *Tawilis* explores the drama behind one fisherman's struggle with his damaged environment.

Program Highlights

This year, the festival features two forums that are free to the public. We are very excited by the 2nd DocuAsia Forum co-presenting with the David Lam Centre at SFU on May 19 and 21st, when an important Canadian documentary *China's Leap of Faith* will be screened. This two-episode film for the first time presents a comprehensive study of the country's remarkable resurgence of religious devotion. After each screening, there will be discussion including academics and Chinese religious practitioners who will also consider the relevance of this spiritual revival for British Columbia's religious landscape given the dramatic rise in recent years of immigration from the People's Republic of China. Christopher Sumphton, the director and producer of the film will be attending the event.

And on May 28, come and watch *Ohla ai, Ohla ai! (Listen Up, Watch Out!)*, listening the real voice from a group dynamic young men and women who came to Canada not long ago. This short film is an artistic project made by the students of the World Beat Project at the Vancouver Community College, in which they will discuss language and other life barriers, and show how they are fighting to get what they want. After the film screening, a community forum will be held when the audience can meet the youth and project staff. This special event is jointly hosted by VCC, SUCCESS, YWCA, and the New Asia Film Festival.

Showcasing Richmond Talent

What also makes this year's festival unique is that 11 films are Canadian-bred, and 7 of these are homegrown in Richmond; for the first time, the festival will be shining a spotlight on such Richmond film talents as Joe Chang, Andrea Wan, and Anna Wang. A special showcase of Joe Chang's five animation films will be held on May 29. Joe will be attending the event and will also donate his art works to the Richmond Public Library.

New Initiative of the Dream Project

Last but not the least, we are extremely excited to announce a new initiative of the first youth film program in Richmond, the Dream Project.

Sponsored by the BC Arts Council and 2010 Legacies Now, the Dream Project is an innovative community outreach of the New Asia Film Festival. We are very happy to have the award winning filmmaker Jeff Chiba Stearns on board to be the professional mentor and instructor, who will give students hands-on experience and training in professional filmmaking, animation and multimedia art installation techniques. The students' works will be screened and displayed in public locations throughout Richmond.

To name the project Dream, we wish this program could help students to explore imaginative ideas and endless possibilities, challenging themselves to take risks and be creative. We also see the creation of the project as a ripple on water, beginning with the dream of an individual, the most innermost place of our soul, spreading out to the wider community. We hope that by pushing the boundaries of expectation through new media technology, the Dream Project will stimulate a collective sensation within the community.

Details and History

The New Asia Film Festival was inaugurated in 2008. As one of the most culturally diverse cities in Canada, Richmond's rapid development is recognized in large part as the achievement and contribution of recent Asian immigrants, who account for more than 60% of the city's population. This dynamic demographic change happening in Richmond and all over Canada inspired the conception of the New Asia Film Festival, which aims at fostering deeper intercultural understanding and communication between different ethnic groups and different cultures. Beside the annual film event, the festival also has a monthly film series at the Richmond Cultural Centre.

The 3rd New Asia Film Festival is grateful to the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement, and is proud to be part of Asian Heritage Month.

Besides the two free forums, the festival is open to all members at \$5 a screening. A membership to the Cinevolution Media Arts Society can be purchased at the venue for a \$5 annual fee. Members will also be entitled to attend other society events produced throughout the year, free of charge.

For festival program, please visit www.vnaff.ca.

Festival Venue: Richmond Cultural Centre, 7700 Minoru Gate, Richmond, BC

Ticket Price: \$5 / per screening

Membership Fee: \$5 / per year

For Ticket Reservation, please call 604-247-8300. (credit cards accepted)

For general inquires: 604-247-8300, 778-869-3278, info@cinevolutionmedia.com

***DocuAsia Forum* Screening Time and Registration Information:**

Cost: Free and open to the public

Wed May 19 Richmond Cultural Centre
7pm – 9pm **The Bamboo Cross (episode title)**
Registration Information: info@cinevolutionmedia.com, 778-869-3278

Friday May 21 Room 1800, Harbour Centre (Simon Fraser University, Harbour Centre Campus)
7pm-9pm **The Gods Come Home**
Register Online at: www.sfu.ca/reserve

***Olha ai, Olha ai! (Listen Up, Watch Out!)* Film Screening & Community Forum**

Friday May 28 10am – 12pm Richmond Cultural Centre

Free and open to the public

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