

THE BEST OF CONTEMPORARY ASIAN CINEMA



THE 3RD ANNUAL TORONTO

REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 25-28 1999

B L O O R C I N E M A
506 BLOOR STREET WEST

J O H N S P O T T O N T H E A T R E
150 JOHN STREET

J A C K M A N H A L L
317 DUNDAS STREET WEST

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DU CINÉMA ONTARIEN

WELCOME TO THE 3RD ANNUAL TORONTO REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL!

1999 has been a banner year for Reel Asian. We moved into our tiny new office at 80 Spadina Ave (where we are surrounded by beautiful art galleries we have no time to visit!), we began the laborious process of incorporating as a non-profit, and finally, we significantly expanded our programming with almost double the number of films and invited directors as last year.

Needless to say, we are tremendously excited by this year's events. The films are uniformly outstanding and represent a wide spectrum of Asian experiences and aesthetics. From the search for identity and meaning explored so poetically in the Asian Adoptee Programme, to the struggle for a really good way to ask a cute girl out explored in *Freshmen*, there's definitely something here for all tastes and preferences! A warm thank-you to Anita Lee and the motley crew of filmmakers, programmers and assorted film buffs who participated in the programming this year.

We are also thrilled to be bringing you these films in what has become a high-profile event

that has grown from its humble roots in 1997 to the expanded, fun-filled four-day event before you this year. We are back at the Bloor Cinema, after a one-year hiatus, and for the first time ever, we will be presenting screenings opposite each other, to make room for all the fabulous films we'd like you to see. And, as in past years, we will be hosting workshops, panel discussions, receptions and, last but not least, terrific parties with groovy music, great food and, of course, lots of cool people with streaked hair and great accessories!

Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of the wonderful people who've donated their considerable energy and expertise to the festival. Special thank-yous to claman for his design work, Damian for our webpage, Tammy and Heejeh for their corporate development work, Derek Luis for organizing our workshop, our Boards of Directors and Advisors for their expertise, Ford of Canada and Korean Airlines for coming on board as new corporate sponsors, TD Bank Financial Group and Viacom for supporting our festival for a second year, our community sponsors for their generosity and goodwill, and our dedicated volunteers for their unflinching good humour. Kudos to you all!

Caroline Sin and Shelly Hong FESTIVAL DIRECTORS

Welcome to our 3rd and most ambitious year! Our programming has expanded significantly within four exciting days, with continued emphasis on Asian independent visions and emerging talent. Our programme this year presents six debut films, including our opening night film, Philip Gotanda's *Life Tastes Good* which premiered at Sundance, and 35 Toronto premieres, including fresh, challenging and memorable shorts by a broad range of artists. We are also thrilled to present Canadian premieres of returning directors, such as Fruit Chan, who premiered his internationally acclaimed feature film *Made in Hong Kong* with us last year and follows up this year with *The Longest Summer*. Our international spotlight this year is South Korea, and we are proud to co-present with Cinematheque and introduce to a Toronto audience four feature films by a new generation of exciting South Korean directors. Two programmes of South Korean short films,

curated by Toronto filmmaker Helen Lee, completes the spotlight. The festival also introduces an Artist Spotlight this year, and Wayne Yung, a prolific, young Vancouver-based video artist is "spotlighted" in a programme curated by Toronto video artist and writer Richard Fung. A special Asian Adoptee Programme and Panel Discussion is curated by American guest curator Me-K Ahn. From features to shorts, from the formal to the entertaining, we hope there is something for everyone. Our goal is to present original, diverse and stimulating works that showcase the full spectrum of Asian independent filmmaking — with a focus on discovery. I'd like to mention all who contributed to programming this year: the board programming committee, guest curators, associate programmer Andrew Sun, and festival directors Caroline Sin and Shelly Hong. Please sit back and enjoy!

Anita Lee PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR



THE USUAL SUSPECTS

DIRECTORS Caroline Sin and Shelly Hong **PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR** Anita Lee **PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR** Shelly Hong
GUEST CURATORS Helen Lee, Richard Fung, Andrew Sun and Me-K Ahn **CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT** Caroline Sin, Heejeh Choi and Tammy Chan
SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATORS Laurence Cohen and Nina Esrock **VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR** Alka Sharma **WORKSHOP ASSISTANT** Stephen Lan **SPECIAL PROMOTIONS** Tammy Chan
PHOTOGRAPHY Rabin Ramah and Laurence Cohen **DESIGNER** claman **WEB DESIGNER** Damian Tran **CATALOGUE EDITOR** Caroline Sin **PUBLICIST** Kim Yu and Blue Moon Communications
BOARD OF DIRECTORS Helen Lee, Keith Lock, Wilson Lee, Chan Park, and Kwoi Gin **ARTISTIC ADVISORY** Kim Yu, Bennett Lo, Jean Yoon, Richard Fung and Carolynne Hew
SPECIAL THANK YOUS Mi-Jeong Lee, Eddie Lee, Paul and Carm Bordanero, Derek Luis, Davina Chan, B.C. Lee, Joanne Fraser, Bill Malcolm, Jonathan DaSilva, Jenna Yu, Sandy Kang, Jay Yoo, Dustin Yu, Susan Oxtoby, Andréa Picard, Tina Hahn, Jimm Tran, Cecile Ngyuen, Monica Chang, Marco Santaguidda, David Fujino, Arthur's friend who donated the sofa, Ann Chiu, Byron Wong, Mr. and Mrs. Hong, John Wooden and Tracey Peacock, Indie Story, MiroVision, Open Cinema, KOFIC, Cinematheque Ontario, V-Tape, Citytv, Chart Magazine, Sienna Films, Cahoots Theatre Projects, International Academy of Design, and all of our dedicated and fabulous volunteers

Toronto Reel Asian International gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council, the city of Toronto through the Toronto Arts Council, and the Ontario Film Development Corporation.

VIA COM

1999 SCHEDULE

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25 8PM @BLOOR CINEMA OPENING NIGHT PRESENTATION

Life Tastes Good CANADIAN PREMIERE! Director Philip Gotanda present.
Preceded by **The Offering** Director Paul Lee present.

FOLLOWED BY THE OPENING NIGHT GALA AT JET NITECLUB (360 ADELAIDE W)
WITH DJ BYRON WONG OF THE NEWMUSIC

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 5PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

Your Karaoke Better Than My Karaoke? Shorts Programme

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 7PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

Postcards from the Edge of Seoul: New Korean Shorts I
ALL FILMS CANADIAN OR TORONTO PREMIERES! Director Kim Yun-tae present.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 9:30PM @BLOOR CINEMA

Made in Korea: New Korean Shorts II
ALL FILMS CANADIAN OR TORONTO PREMIERES! Director Song Il-gon present.
FOLLOWED BY A CATERED RECEPTION AT SAN RESTAURANT (676 QUEEN W)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 10AM @CBC STUDIOS WORKSHOP

Producing on a Budget:
Creating High Quality Feature Films Using Digital Video

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 2PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

Standard Deviation CANADIAN PREMIERE! Director Samuel K. Lee present.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 4:30PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

Love & Other Pains Shorts Programme
Directors Carolynne Hew and Nicole Chung present.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 6:30PM @JACKMAN HALL*

The Day a Pig Fell Into the Well TORONTO PREMIERE!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 7PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

This Queen's Cantonese: Spotlight on the Video Art of Wayne Yung
Director present.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 8:45PM @JACKMAN HALL*

The Power of Kangwon Province TORONTO PREMIERE!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27 9:20PM @BLOOR CINEMA

The Longest Summer CANADIAN PREMIERE!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 12PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

Living in Half Tones: Asian Adoptee Short Films and Panel Discussion
FOLLOWED BY A PANEL DISCUSSION ON CROSS CULTURAL ADOPTION

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 3PM @JACKMAN HALL*

Green Fish TORONTO PREMIERE!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 3:15PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE

My Own Private Asia Shorts Programme

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 5:15PM @JACKMAN HALL*

Motel Cactus TORONTO PREMIERE!

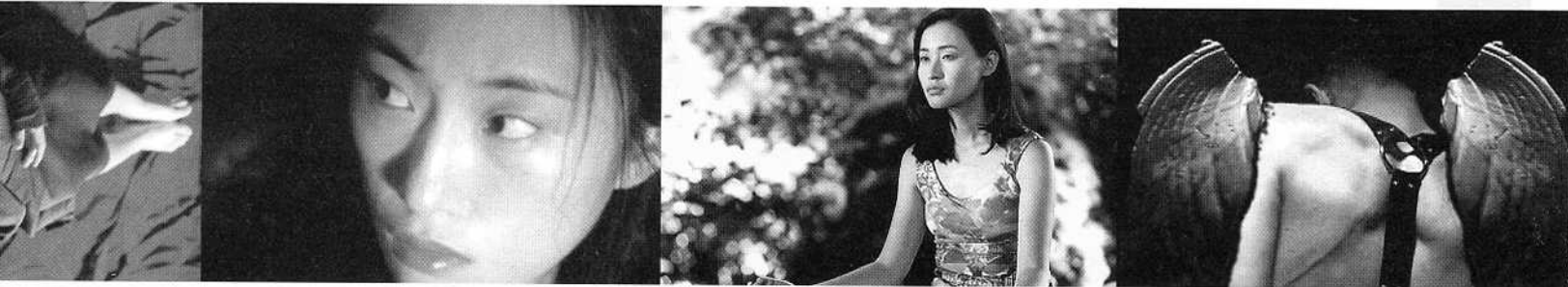
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28 6PM @BLOOR CINEMA CLOSING NIGHT PRESENTATION

Freshmen CANADIAN PREMIERE! Director Tom Huang present.

FOLLOWED BY THE CLOSING NIGHT GALA AT 23/100 (100 NIAGARA)

*Co-presentation with Cinematheque Ontario.

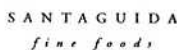
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LIFE TASTES GOOD

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25 8PM @BLOOR CINEMA
OPENING NIGHT PRESENTATION
LIFE TASTES GOOD

Director: Philip Kan Gotanda. USA, 1999, 35 mm, colour, 90 min. **CANADIAN PREMIERE!**

Acclaimed American playwright Philip Kan Gotanda makes his feature debut with the visually stunning *Life Tastes Good*, a stylish and succulent feast for the eyes and the mind. *Life Tastes Good* follows Harry (Sab Shimono), a money-laundering accountant, who returns home to San Francisco to prepare himself a final and fatal meal of sautéed poisonous angel's nightcap mushroom. But first, he must reconcile with his needy and hilariously dysfunctional children (Tamlyn Tomita and Greg Watanabe) whom he abandoned years ago. Which will claim him first: the mushroom that also killed his wife, the mysterious beauty who plies him with California rolls, or the sinister Mr. Jones with his lethal finger and his lemons? An eclectic Californian fusion of Tarentino and Tampopo, *Life Tastes Good* is a powerful and often hilarious film about family, loyalty, death, and the power of food. **DIRECTOR PRESENT.**

PHILIP KAN GOTANDA is an acclaimed playwright whose two newest plays, *Yohen* (starring Danny Glover) and *Sisters Matsumoto* are currently playing in Los Angeles and Seattle. *Life Tastes Good* is his first feature film.

Preceded by **THE OFFERING**

Director: Paul Lee. Canada, 1999, 35 mm, colour, 10 min.

Without dialogue or music and shot in cinematic 35 mm, *The Offering* centers on the evolution of love and friendship between a monk and the novice who comes into his life. **DIRECTOR PRESENT.**

PAUL LEE was born in Hong Kong and schooled in Toronto. His two previous films have screened around the world and won numerous awards.

FOLLOWED BY THE OPENING NIGHT GALA AT JET NITECLUB (360 ADELAIDE ST. W. EAST OF SPADINA) WITH DJ BYRON WONG OF THE NEWMUSIC. SPONSORED BY THE FORD MOTOR COMPANY OF CANADA. ADMISSION IS FREE WITH TICKET PURCHASE OR \$5 AT THE DOOR.



THE OFFERING

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26 5PM @JOHN SPOTTON THEATRE
YOUR KARAOKE BETTER THAN MY KARAOKE?
SHORTS PROGRAMME

This eclectic collection of imaginative shorts explores and challenges cultural stereotypes and prevailing myths about Asians in popular culture. Using diverse, hybrid approaches — animation, essay, documentary and mockumentary — these film and video artists draw on humour and irony to show the many sides of the issue of representation.

AMF'S TIRESIAS Director: Ann Marie Fleming. Canada, 1998, video, colour, 5 min.

Episode Five of the continuing saga of Stickgirl has her reading between the lines of the ancient myth of Tiresias. **Ann Marie Fleming** is a writer, producer, director and editor. She has made more than 20 films which have been screened and awarded internationally.

EMPTY ORCHESTRA Director: Kira Wu. Canada, 1997, video, colour, 14 min.

TORONTO PREMIERE!

Documentary or parody? *Empty Orchestra* takes a look at popular culture through the triple lens of tabloid TV, news reportage, and the personal narratives of karaoke singers. **Kira Wu** is currently pursuing an MFA at Simon Fraser University in the Interdisciplinary Arts Program.

NO MILK, BUT THERE'S ALWAYS COKE Director: Ernesto M. Foronda. USA, 1998, video, colour, 6 min. **CANADIAN PREMIERE!**

In this tongue-in-cheek short film, a young man scolds his mother for participating in a beauty pageant. A 60's Coca Cola industrial film shot in the Philippines plays in the background, providing its own ironic commentary. **Ernesto M. Foronda** was born in the Philippines. He is currently an MFA candidate in the Film Program at Columbia University.

RESCUE IN CHINATOWN Director: Keiichi Kondoh. USA, 1998, 16 mm, B&W, 5 min.

CANADIAN PREMIERE!

An experimental chop-sockey, kung-fu flick that explores Asian stereotypes and cinematic notions of the "hero." **Keiichi Kondoh** is currently an MFA candidate in Film and Media Arts at Temple University. His Current projects include "a tourist" and "Reconstructing my Japan."

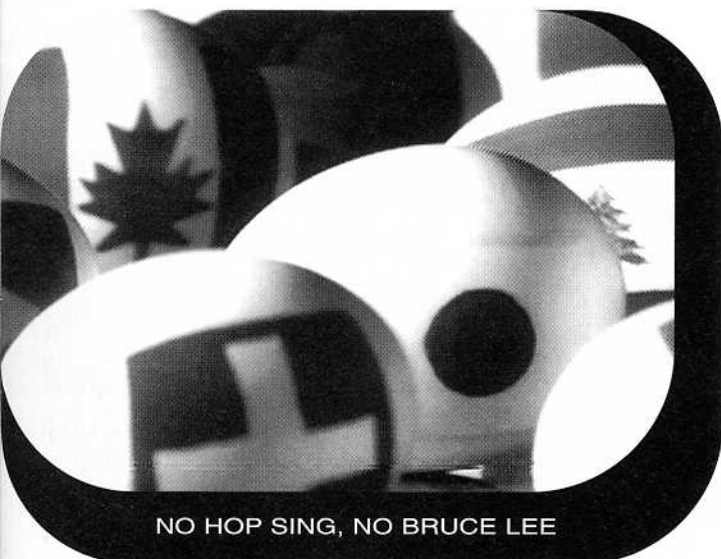
NO HOP SING, NO BRUCE LEE Director: Janice Tanaka. USA, 1998, video, colour, 32 min.

TORONTO PREMIERE!

The single dimensional representation of Asian men as "silent, sex-less, obedient houseboys" or mystical "martial arts masters" is challenged and unravelled through the experiences and voices of Asian-American men. **Janice Tanaka** is a director, producer, and computer whiz. She is a pioneer in the use of processed images within experimental narrative form.

SEASON OF THE BOYS Director: Ho Tam. USA/Canada, 1998, video, colour, 4 min.

Shot at the 1997 Chinatown Basketball Tournament in New York City, this impressionistic short film mixes the unlikely subjects of athletics, beauty and voyeuristic desire. Born in Hong Kong and educated in Toronto, **Ho Tam** works in a diverse mix of disciplines including painting, video, print and public art.



NO HOP SING, NO BRUCE LEE

