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TORONTO REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

NOVEMBER 26 - 29, 1998

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FESTIVAL CINEMA
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Welcome...

...to the 2nd annual Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival. In 1997, we launched the festival with Toronto premieres of independent feature films and shorts by Asian North American directors. Maintaining our commitment to independent and auteur visions, 1998 introduces an exciting international component with independent discoveries from Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea.

We are thrilled to open the festival with the Toronto premiere of *hundred percent*, a feature debut by Canadian director Eric Koyanagi. *Hundred percent* is written and directed by Koyanagi, with an all Asian-American super cast from Garrett Wang to Tamlyn Tomita.

1997 marked a historical world event, the handover of Hong Kong to China. Hong Kong is our spotlight this year, with a handful of HK films from diverse perspectives. We are especially proud to present the Toronto premiere of the most critically acclaimed and most talked about HK film of the year, winner of the best film award at the 1997 Hong Kong International Film Festival, Fruit Chan's *Made in Hong Kong*.

Bringing Asian worlds together, our panel this year is *Making Your First Feature Film: a Worldwide Asian Indie Perspective* with directors Eric Koyanagi (Can), Chris Chan Lee (USA) and Bryan Chang (Hong Kong).

Enjoy!

Anita Lee
Director/Programmer



OPENING NIGHT PRESENTATION

hundred percent

Hundred percent, a feature debut by Canadian director Eric Koyanagi, is a charming, hip and stylish comedy-drama set in Venice Beach, California. Isaac, played by Dustin Nguyen of 21 Jumpstreet, has been looking for love all his life when Thaise (Tamlyn Tomita), full of mystery and attitude, walks right into his boardwalk café. Little does he know that Thaise has been followed from New York by her fiancé Mingus (Stan Egi), who desperately wants what Thaise has. At a Home Grown Yellow Power Party, where the dopest of the dope come to get down, Isaac's friends Slim and Troy also find themselves at turning points in their lives. Slim, along with best pal Casey, is on a spiritual quest for enlightenment, income and escape from Crankshaft, an original gangsta from whom he has won a low down, bad-ass, don't-mess-wid-me lowrider. Troy (Garrett Wang), supported by his girlfriend Cleveland, stands poised on the brink of silver-screen stardom when French auteur director Jean Jacques Baudelaire hires him to star in his latest epic. Together these friends discover that finding what's missing in their lives sometimes means giving up what's most important.

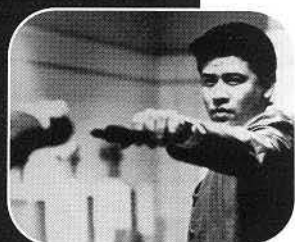
ERIC KOYANAGI was born in Toronto but made his way to the acclaimed University of Southern California Film School. He has worked in many capacities on more than 20 film projects, and has directed eight short films. He is currently preparing his next screenplay for production.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26
ROYAL THEATRE
8PM**

**HUNDRED PERCENT (USA)
Toronto Premiere!**
Director: Eric Koyanagi
1998 35mm colour 102min

Director present

**Co-presented by
THE TORONTO-DOMINION BANK**



shorts programme 1

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

A stick-figure fantasizes that she wins an Academy Award and respect from her parents and the public.

ANN MARIE FLEMING is a writer, producer, director and editor. She was raised in Canada and has made more than 20 films which have been screened and awarded internationally.

CRICKETS

Sue, a curious 10-year-old, playfully pushes the boundaries between innocence and maturity. Raised by a single parent, she is left to her own devices when exploring adult territory and must deal with the consequences when she pushes the limit too far.

JANE KIM was born in Seoul, Korea, grew up in Edmonton, Alberta and now resides in Toronto. *Crickets* is her first film which she wrote, produced and directed.

CRACK OF THE HALO

An angel imprisoned by the walls of poverty stretches her hands towards the sunlight to become a butterfly. But the weight of the cruel world brings her crashing down, cracking her halo. This mesmerizing film borders on madness as our angel actions her escape (terminates her innocence?)

JIN-HAN KIM from Seoul, Korea has directed two films including *CONTEMPT* (1994) and has shown his films around the world.

RETURN TO GRACE

At an impromptu family gathering, Jae encounters his schizophrenic sister, Grace. Struck with memories of terror, confusion and secrecy, Jae struggles to find closure and understanding of his mentally ill sister.

LUCI KWAK's fascination with the complexity of human relationships led to a psychology degree from UCLA; her passion for cinema led her to San Francisco State University's film department. *Return to Grace* has won praise and several awards for its candor on schizophrenia.

LIFE IS ELSEWHERE

The grass is always greener on the other side. Nowhere on earth is that sentiment felt more than transient Hong Kong. There is no inertia here. Wealth is just a few stock points away, a better life is merely an immigration interview away, and love and regret is over with a blink of an eye. Characters struggle to climb over the fence to get a greener view.

STANLEY BELOVED

The sleepy enclave of Stanley on the other side of Hong Kong island is where two pals – one white, one half-Chinese – fritter away a summer day trying to figure out what they want to do with their lives. When the threat of separation hits, they must struggle with racial and sexual identity. Like the neighbourhood, it's part white, part Chinese but all very confused.

SIMON CHUNG is a graduate of the film program at Toronto's York University. Since his return to Hong Kong, he has been working in various capacities in the local film and television industry. His work as an independent filmmaker has earned him several awards and his films have been shown around the world.

LIVER AND POTATO

War time in an unnamed country at an unnamed time, the story of Cane is presented through eight chapters of experiences. A beautifully haunting tale unfolds as Cane grapples with the decision between the life of his brother and the survival of his family. A reconstruction of the biblical story of Cain and Abel with a reflection on violence, sacrifice and basic human instinct.

ILGON SONG was born in Seoul, Korea. He graduated from the Seoul Art Institute and is presently studying at the Polish National Film School in Lodz. Ilgon has completed six short films and has received critical acclaim from film festivals around the world.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27
ROYAL THEATRE
7PM**

GREAT EXPECTATIONS (Canada)

Director: Ann Marie Fleming
1997 35mm colour 1min

CRICKETS (Canada)

Director: Jane Kim
1998 16mm colour 12min

CRACK OF THE HALO (South Korea)

Director: Jin-Han Kim
1997 35mm colour 17min

RETURN TO GRACE (USA)

Director: Luci Kwak
1997 16mm b/w 12min

LIFE IS ELSEWHERE (Hong Kong)

Director: Simon Chung
1996 16mm colour 14min

STANLEY BELOVED (Hong Kong)

Director: Simon Chung
1997 16mm colour 20min

LIVER AND POTATO (South Korea)

Director: Ilgon Song
1998 35mm colour 22min

Co-presented by

CAHOOTS THEATRE

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theatre projects

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

made in hong kong

Beating out Wong Kar-Wai's *Happy Together*, *Made in Hong Kong*, a first feature by Fruit Chan, won Best Film of the Year at the 1997 Hong Kong International Film Festival. Fast gaining critical acclaim at international festivals worldwide, *Made in Hong Kong* is the most talked about film in and out of Hong Kong today. The buzz in HK's industry and the word on the street is that *Made in Hong Kong* will define post-handover Hong Kong cinema to come.

Fruit Chan's punky debut single-handedly resuscitated the Hong Kong film industry, which seemed to make only bad Triad b-flicks and sappy romantic comedies of late. The story of a doomed relationship between a petty gang member and the daughter of a debtor he's collecting from has an awesome energy not unlike Hong Kong itself. But it's not the tourist board version of high finance and skyscrapers that Chan depicts; it's the slummy housing projects and dead-end kids in Hong Kong's hood. The indie aesthetic of the film (slow motion, stop motion, jump cuts etc.), extends to the way he actually made the film, using only 80,000 feet of leftover film stock from Cantopop star Andy Lau's production company and a five-person crew. Lead actor Sam Lee's sexy stick-thin punk, replete with wet dreams and Neiky Yim's quirky waif make for one of the most enigmatic couples in HK's - if not Asian - film history. While it would be didactic to read the nihilistic story as a statement on the ex-colony's future, *Made in Hong Kong* reveals greater truths about the city, its people and their attitudes than all the CNN news, CBC reports and Chinese Boxes put together.

FRUIT CHAN has worked in film from non-profit to major studio productions and decided to go all independent. In 1994, he started writing the script of MADE IN HONG KONG and secretly saved up short ends of film stock. By 1996 he had saved more than 80,000 feet of film stock and raised \$80,000 to make his award-winning film.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27
ROYAL THEATRE
9PM**

**MADE IN HONG KONG (Hong Kong)
*Toronto Premiere!***

Director: Fruit Chan
1997 35mm colour 108min

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shorts programme 2

A COMPLEX SITUATION

A comical, live-action animation featuring Frank the Horse and Bob the Bird. Bob must decide how far he should go for his lifelong pal when Frank gets into trouble with the law during a bout of unemployment.

FAE YAMAGUCHI was born and raised in Honolulu where she received a Master of Fine Art in Sculpture from the University of Hawai'i. It was during her thesis work that she began to combine her toy-like kinetic sculpture with video. Since then her videos have screened in Honolulu, San Francisco, New York, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Malaysia and now Toronto.

HOW TO BE MORE CHINESE

A hilarious, mock-infomercial selling in-home consumers AsiaTech's 'How to Be More Chinese' kits. After all, Asians are taking over the world and everybody's got a touch of yellow fever.

JANE LUK is an actor, writer, comedian and improviser. She has made numerous television and film appearances, a whack of commercials and is a veteran of the stage. Jane has received recognition for her talents with both a CHALMERS AWARD and a DORA AWARD.

JOOK SING

A student documentary trying to answer the questions: Who is Chinese? What is Chinese? How do you measure how Chinese you are? Jook Sing tries to define identity through interviews from both sides of the Chinese scale with insight, honesty and humour.

DENNY CHAN completed his BFA at York University in film and video. He has won several awards for his documentary works. Denny aspires to write, direct and edit television commercials and feature films. **MICHELLE LEE** completed her BFA in film production at York University. Michelle has won awards for her directing and cinematography and won a spot in the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television's National Apprenticeship Training Program for editing.

DOUBLE CONCERTO

Centering around a modern ballet piece shot on location parallel cut with the same footage being edited on a flatbed, this multi-disciplinary project involves not only music, dance and film, but new ways of looking at them.

KWAN HO TSE has a wide range of experience in the film and video field including lighting, camera and editing. He opened his own post production company, Kwan Films, in 1996. Presently, he is developing various arts/performance films and documentaries.

BY THIS PARTING

An evocative, meditative and abstract look at the life of Mrs. Chiba, the great aunt of Mieko Ouchi, and her time spent at a TB sanatorium in New Denver, BC. The film brings together still photos, poetry by the late Chie Kamegaya, and performances from Kita No Taiko (Edmonton's Drums of the North).

MIEKO OUCHI graduated from the University of Alberta with a BFA with Distinction from the Professional Acting programme and studied at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts. Since then she has worked across Canada as a professional actor, writer and popular theatre facilitator.

MOMMY, WHAT'S WRONG?

Along with optically-printed home movies and hand-processed super-8 footage, the filmmaker interviews her mother about immigration, motherhood and spirituality. A poignant and intimate search for strength that only a mother can provide.

ANITA CHANG has been working in film and video for the past four years. She attended Tufts University where she received a BA in American Studies and English and is now a Master of Fine Arts thesis candidate in cinema studies at San Francisco State University.

FIGHTING GRANDPA

A rich and ardent journey through home movies, photographs and interviews as the filmmaker pieces together the relationship between his Korean immigrant grandparents. The film portrays the strength of his grandmother who raised four children alone during the ten-year absence of her husband. She then gave up her successful life in Korea to reunite with her husband in a new country because the obligation of tradition is far stronger than a woman's independence. Through the stories and images, the filmmaker searches for a simple shred of evidence that his grandfather loved his grandmother.

GREG PAK studied political science at Yale, history at Oxford, and film production at NYU. His award-winning short films Mr. Lee, Mouse, Mo Po Knock Knock, and Fighting Grandpa have been screened around the world. Greg is now seeking funding to shoot his first feature film.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

JOHN SPOTTON CINEMA

2PM

A COMPLEX SITUATION (USA)

Toronto Premiere!

Director: Fae Yamaguchi

1998 video colour 5min

HOW TO BE MORE CHINESE (Canada)

Director: Jane Luk

1997 video colour 7min

JOOK SING (Canada)

Directors: Denny Chan, Michelle Lee

1998 video colour 19min

DOUBLE CONCERTO (Canada)

Director: Kwan Ho Tse

1998 video colour 5min

BY THIS PARTING (Canada)

Director: Mieko Ouchi

1998 16mm colour 13min

MOMMY, WHAT'S WRONG? (USA)

Director: Anita Chang

1997 16mm colour 13min

FIGHTING GRANDPA (USA)

Canadian Premiere!

Director: Greg Pak

1998 16mm colour 21min

Some of the above

Directors present

carriage

A young, pregnant Chinese immigrant girl trudges through her days trying to make ends meet. In a lonely country where she has no friends or family and an absentee husband, her will to live is put to the test as she is lured by the warmth of death.

ANNIE LAU was born in Hong Kong and immigrated to Canada with her family in 1981. Annie majored in dramatic arts at Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts and furthered her education at Sheridan College in the Media Arts Program.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
JOHN SPOTTON CINEMA
5PM**

CARRIAGE (Canada)
Director: Annie Lau
1998 video b/w 22min

KELLY LOVES TONY (USA)
Toronto Premiere!
Director: Spencer Nakasako
1998 16mm colour 55min

**Co-presented by
NAATA
THE NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN
TELECOMMUNICATIONS ASSOCIATION**

kelly loves tony

She's a straight A student. He's a high school dropout who used to run with a gang. Kelly and Tony are both Lu Mien, from a hill tribe in Laos. With the birth of their son, the young couple suddenly find themselves locked into adult roles, swamped by demands of parenthood, old world family pressures and their own conflicting aspirations. Over 18 months, Kelly and Tony tape 120 hours of their relationship. Emmy Award-winning director Spencer Nakasako deftly guides this uniquely honest video diary of Kelly Saetern, 17, and Tony Saelio, 22, who turn the camera on themselves to show what it's like to grow up too fast, too soon in East Oakland, California. As they navigate the nebulous cultural zone between immigrant parents and fast-track American society, the camera becomes witness and confidante to a young couple in search of their dreams.

SPENCER NAKASAKO has produced and directed several documentaries including A.K.A. Don Bonus, which won a National Emmy Award. He wrote the screenplay and co-directed a feature film Life is Cheap, But Toilet Paper is Expensive with acclaimed director Wayne Wang.

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obits

All following up their first feature films, six of America's hottest Asian directors come together to compile a feature-length anthology movie: Rea Tajiri (*STRAWBERRY FIELDS*), Michael Idemoto and Eric Nakamura (*SUNSETS*), Justin Lin (*SHOPPING FOR FANGS*) and Chris Chan Lee (*YELLOW*). *Obits* is a radioactive look at the topic on the tip of everyone's tongues these days: death. "We saw each other at so many film festivals we decided to figure out a way to spend that time slumming between screenings and strange meals more productively by hashing out the skeleton of our idea. Nobody helped us make our features, so we were pretty sure we could pull this off."

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
JOHN SPOTTON CINEMA
7PM

OBITS (USA)

Toronto Premiere!

Directors: Rea Tajiri,
Justin Lin, Michael Idemoto,
Eric Nakamura, Chris Chan Lee
1998 video colour 95min

Director present

- Obit. 001* **LITTLE MURDERS** by Rea Tajiri
A surreal musical short that takes place New Years Eve 1997, starring Angie Suh, with music by Sooyoung Park of Seam.
- Obit. 002* **BREEZES** by Justin Lin
A momentary fling in the city of Las Vegas starring Michael Idemoto of *Sunsets*.
- Obit. 003* **ENTER THE DRAG/DAG ON** by Eric Nakamura
Bruce Lee dead! Interviews with Bruce's daughter, comedian Margaret Cho, and Jenny Shimizu as Bruce.
- Obit. 004* **AMERICA O OF 30 (LETTERS TO WENDI)** by Michael Idemoto
A young man, returning home, starts from the beginning and finds out that a few things have changed.
- Obit. 005* **GET - THE - DIGITS** by Chris Chan Lee
Rose moves from the Midwest to Los Angeles and finds romance. A love story about solitude, revenge and death starring Angie Suh and Burt Bulos of *Yellow*.

fufu, the worldweary

Fufu, the Worldweary is an epic-length videotape inspired by the director's *Dream Book*, where Obitani Yuuri recorded fantastic dreams every day in the intense heat of that abnormally hot summer of 1995. Three years in the making, the fresh and unique work had it's Canadian premiere at the 1998 Vancouver International Film Festival. Tony Rayns warns, "Even if you saw Obitani's riotous Hair Opera at the VIFF in 1993, you may not be ready for *Fufu, the Worldweary*." Two car thieves, a Japanese national and a lover of British rock music, played by the director himself, and his sidekick, a Japanese-resident Korean and poet, drift through different towns of Japan, filming each other, the locals that they meet and pondering English and Japanese imperialism, the status of Koreans in Japan, John Lennon, the Beatles, and artistic ethics. In a memorable scene, the poet recites John Lennon's lyrics to "Norwegian Girl" while the other sings along with a guitar. There's the ex-girlfriend - with a rose of Sharon, Korea's national flower, tattooed between her breasts - and her lesbian girlfriend, who walk around their apartment nude for most of their scenes. There is also a sad young woman who searches for her lost brother travelling to all the bridges on the island of Japan to find him, an English street musician who plays Irish music, a crazy scooter girl obsessed with a plant and a hermit shaman of Japanese-Indian-English heritage who dislikes being filmed. Playful, irreverent and nostalgic with a narrative and formal style all of its own, *Fufu the Worldweary* breaks all conventions and gives us a very personal and uncommon take on Japan.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28
JOHN SPOTTON CINEMA
9PM

FUFU, THE WORLDWEARY (Japan)

Toronto Premiere!

Writer/Director: Obitani Yuuri
1998 video colour 153min

OBITANI YUURI is a composer, filmmaker, artist and folksinger who majored in opera, but left Osaka Art University before graduating. Still composing, his recent works investigate the relationships between sound and picture, language and audiovisuals, opera/music and film.

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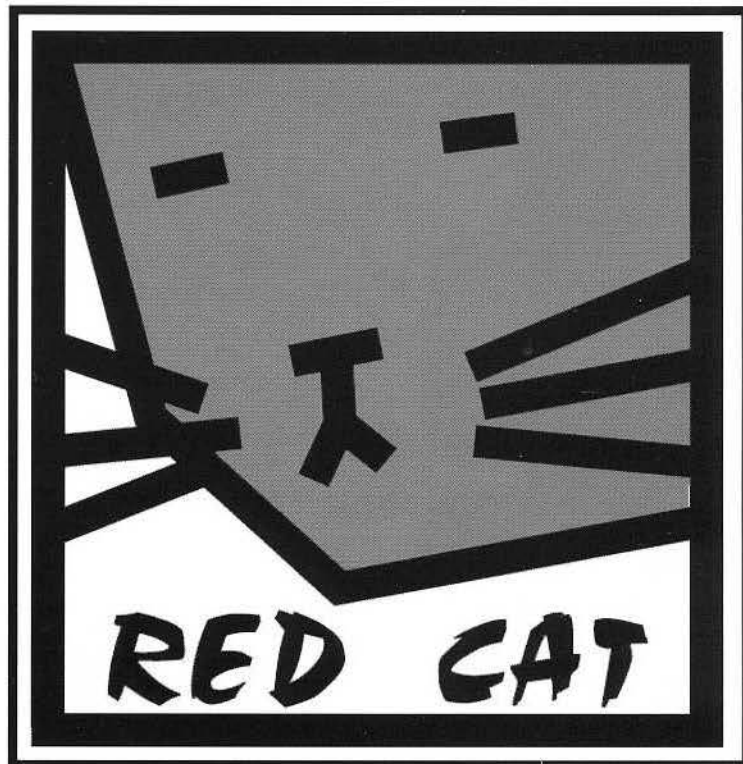
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(film to be announced)

Please refer to catalogue insert for screening information.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

ROYAL THEATRE

7PM



CLOSING NIGHT PRESENTATION

after the crescent

Despite a depressed industry, Hong Kong cinema continues to delight festival audiences with dynamic new voices. While the number of films being produced may have dropped, quality may be on the rise. With the Hong Kong Arts Development Council starting to finance independent productions for the first time in 1997, and the establishment of film and video collectives, an indie scene is on its way in. Bryan Chang's *After The Crescent* is one of the Arts Council's inaugural films. The filmmaker, also a film critic, may not have garnered the fanfare and publicity of his indie colleague Fruit Chan (*Made in Hong Kong*) but *After The Crescent* is also an impressive feature debut. An honest portrayal of the future or lack of it for the young and not-so-well-off, the story takes place in the Wan Chai district, formerly home to Suzie Wong. On the lunar fifteenth of the month, lonely teenage girl Meme has the most extraordinary day (although some would argue a normal one in Wan Chai) that would affect the rest of her life. Under a full moon, Meme wanders alone through the city with her whole life ahead of her but she is unable to grasp the meaning of it. A memorable ménage of interconnected characters enter the film as Meme experiences various strange encounters.

BRYAN CHANG began his screenwriting career when he joined Jackie Chan's Golden Way Films Production Company as a member of its creative team. Since then, he's directed, written screenplays, and is a film critic writing reviews for newspapers and magazines.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

ROYAL THEATRE

9PM

AFTER THE CRESCENT (Hong Kong)

Canadian Premiere!

Writer/Director:

Bryan Chang Wai -Hung

1997 35mm colour 118min

Director present

Co-presented by

CCNC

CHINESE CANADIAN
NATIONAL COUNCIL

CCNC

DIRECTORS PANEL

making your first feature film: a worldwide Asian indie experience

PANELISTS

Eric Koyanagi

director, Hundred Percent (USA)

Keith Locke

director, Small Pleasures (Canada)

Bryan Chang

director, After The Crescent (Hong Kong)

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

JOHN SPOTTON CINEMA

2PM

free admission

schedule

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26 ROYAL THEATRE

8PM **HUNDRED PERCENT (USA)**
Toronto Premier!
OPENING NIGHT PRESENTATION
Director Present

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27 ROYAL THEATRE

7PM **SHORTS PROGRAMME 1**
GREAT EXPECTATIONS (Canada)
CRICKETS (Canada)
CRACK OF THE HALO (South Korea)
RETURN TO GRACE (USA)
LIFE IS ELSEWHERE (Hong Kong)
STANLEY BELOVED (Hong Kong)
LIVER AND POTATO (South Korea)

9PM **MADE IN HONG KONG (Hong Kong)**
Toronto Premier!
SPECIAL PRESENTATION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28 JOHN SPOTTON, NFB

2PM **SHORTS PROGRAMME 2**
A COMPLEX SITUATION (USA)
Toronto Premier!
HOW TO BE MORE CHINESE (Canada)
JOOK SING (Canada)
DOUBLE CONCERTO (Canada)
BY THIS PARTING (Canada)
MOMMY, WHAT'S WRONG? (USA)
FIGHTING GRANDPA (USA)
Canadian Premier!
Some Directors Present

5PM **CARRIAGE (Canada)**
KELLY LOVES TONY (USA)
Toronto Premier!

7PM **OBITS (USA)**
Toronto Premier!
Director Present

9PM **FUFU, THE WORLDWEARY (Japan)**
Toronto Premier!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29 ROYAL THEATRE

7PM **TO BE ANNOUNCED**

9PM **AFTER THE CRESCENT (Hong Kong)**
Canadian Premier!
CLOSING NIGHT PRESENTATION
Director present

events

OPENING NIGHT GALA

Thursday, November 26, 9:30pm
Ave. & Dav., 122 Avenue Road
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RSVP

CLOSING NIGHT PARTY

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Red Cat Trading Co.
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