

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

As the Korean Ministry of Culture's representative in London I have had the pleasure of overseeing the operations of the Korean Cultural Centre UK and its many offsite festivals since 2012. The cornerstone of these activities has long been the much anticipated annual London Korean Film Festival. With a small, dedicated team we have steered the festival to its 10th anniversary and now that it is upon us I am sure that you will agree we have prepared a programme that is our best yet.

With 52 films at prime cinemas across London, this year we not only welcome the best from Korea's box office but also an opportunity to meet with the star actors Hwang Jung-min and Moon So-ri. The festival has always supported the works of lesser known individuals within the Korean film industry and I am pleased to see the inclusion of an Emerging Directors strand as well as the ever popular Mise-en-Scène shorts. We welcome back the strand selected by the Busan International Film Festival and celebrate our 10th anniversary with a selection of audience choice films from our last 10 years. It's not just our film festival that celebrates an anniversary this year, we also have a stream dedicated to our festival partner CJ Entertainment that in 2015 marks its 20th year in film production. Add to this our family films, and of course the Classics Revisited, and you can see how this year's festival has something for everyone.

The festival, for the last 10 years has prided itself on its accessibility and interaction with audiences, and this year is no exception. With actor/director Q&As, talks, exhibitions and forums running alongside the screenings we hope that you can discover new trends and interesting aspects about Korean film. With our festival growing year on year we have sought a range of new and exciting venue partners to compliment our longstanding relationship with Odeon Cinemas. Therefore in 2015 the festival will be screened across 10 London venues and together we have programmed a dynamic and exciting selection of films to suit all tastes, we look forward to seeing you there.

Kabsoo Kim
Festival Director

Tired of disappointing films picked up from Europe's so-called major festivals? Then you've come to the right place! The London Korean Film Festival (LKFF) obviously features films from only one country, but it covers the Korean waterfront like no other event. The programming team has looked much further than the under-informed selectors from Cannes and Berlin and scoured all areas of production to bring you the very best Korean films of the moment: mainstream hits, art house gems, indie initiatives, archival classics, documentaries, short films, animation ... If you have any interest in what's going on in East Asia's liveliest film culture, then the LKFF has the films you need to see.

This is LKFF's tenth anniversary, and it's been a decade of astonishing growth. An event which started as a modestly-scaled presentation of recent Korean movies has mushroomed to become one of London's essential cultural resources. It offers everything you'd expect from a festival – gala screenings, high-powered guests, opportunities to talk with directors and actors – but also provides a relaxed, convivial environment in which you can explore and discover Korean takes on the issues of the day, from the shifting balance of power in East Asia to the skirmishes in the battle of the sexes. Better yet, the festival's work continues year-round. If you haven't already found it, I recommend you check out the Korean Cultural Centre UK (it's just off Trafalgar Square), which provides a permanent space for Korean art, craft and culture in general. It also hosts regular free film screenings!

The 10th LKFF is the biggest yet. In the following pages you'll find descriptions of everything in the programme, from Korea's all-time box-office champion *Roaring Currents* to exciting films that are current releases in Korea. Literally all tastes are catered for. There are films for family audiences, thrillers, costume dramas, comedies, dramas, even a dark adult fantasy. My own favourites include Kwak Kyung-taek's *The Classified File* (2015), which recreates a notorious kidnapping case from the late 1970s, and the daring choice for the festival's closing night, the unclassifiable *Love And ...* from the great Chinese-Korean novelist-turned-filmmaker Zhang Lu. I'll be watching many of these films again myself, and I hope to meet you at the festival!

Tony Rayns
Chief Festival Advisor

Dr. Anton Bitel

Born in Australia, Anton Bitel has lived in the UK since 1989. After studying Classics at the University of Oxford, he completed a doctorate in Latin literature, and continues to teach ancient languages to Oxford undergraduates. He also works as a film critic with a special interest in East Asian cinema and genre, and regularly freelances for *Sight & Sound*, *Little White Lies* and many other publications. He is a member of the Online Film Critics Society and the London Film Critics' Circle.

Dr. Jinhee Choi

Jinhee Choi is the senior lecturer in film studies at King's College London. She was educated at Seoul National University (South Korea) and completed a B.A. and M.A. in Aesthetics. She earned two PhDs – one in Philosophy and the other in Film Studies – at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (United States) and was a postdoctorate/visiting professor in East Asian Studies and Film Studies at Yale University. She previously taught at Carleton University (Canada) and the University of Kent before moving to King's College in 2011.

Dr. Mark Morris

Mark Morris is a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Main teaching and research interests include Korean cinema, Japanese cinema, modern Japanese fiction, and the social and cultural history of Japan's minorities. He is an occasional advisor to the London Korean Film Festival and frequent contributor to Korean film events in London, Cambridge and elsewhere. He is also an associate of online journal *The Asian-Pacific Journal: Japan Focus*. Recent essays focus on connections between earlier Korean films and the contemporary Korean cinema, representations of Japan within Korean cinema, Korean War films and the imaginary of the North in contemporary South Korean film-making.

Tony Rayns

Tony Rayns is a film critic, commentator, festival programmer and screenwriter. He has written extensively for *Sight & Sound*, and its predecessor the *Monthly Film Bulletin*, and previously contributed to *Time Out* and *Melody Maker*. One of the world's leading experts on Asian cinema, he coordinated the Dragons and Tigers competition for Asian films at the Vancouver International Film Festival 1988-2006 and has provided many DVD commentaries and English subtitle translations for films from Hong Kong, Japan, Korea and Thailand. He has written books about Seijun Suzuki, Wong Kar-wai and Rainer Werner Fassbinder, and has been awarded the Foreign Ministry of Japan's Commendation for services to Japanese cinema.

Simon Ward

Simon started in the industry with London Electronic Arts before moving to the London Film Festival, and then on to be Deputy Director of Cinema at the Institute of Contemporary Arts (ICA London) where he spent three years programming new international cinema, much of which was not in UK distribution. Subsequently, Simon has produced documentaries on various filmmakers, from François Ozon to Wong Kar-wai and contributed to books on UK and US cinema for academic publisher Routledge. Simon has been with the Independent Cinema Office from its inception in 2003 where he programmes a number of UK independent cinemas as well as looking after the ICO's theatrical distribution acquisitions.

THE FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE

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	AM	1PM	2PM	3PM	4PM	5PM
MON 2 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
TUE 3 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
WED 4 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
THU 5 NOV	FORUM FILM AND HISTORY: THE KOREAN EXAMPLE SOAS					
FRI 6 NOV	FORUM FILM AND HISTORY: THE KOREAN EXAMPLE KCC					
SAT 7 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
	FAM	DINO TIME	OPS	FAM	THE NUT JOB	OPS
		BIFF	SOCIALPHOBIA	OPS	BIFF	SET ME FREE
						OPS
SUN 8 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
	CJE	MASQUERADE	OPS	CJE	ROARING CURRENTS	OKS
		BIFF	WILD FLOWERS	OPS	BIFF	END OF WINTER
						OPS
MON 9 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
TUE 10 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
WED 11 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
THU 12 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
FRI 13 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
SAT 14 NOV	[Dotted pattern]					
				FAM	HOW TO STEAL A DOG	PHC
	CLA	SUNSET ON THE SARBIN RIVER	RSC	CLA	A SWORDSMAN IN THE TWILIGHT	RSC

HJM – ACTOR HWANG JUNG-MIN
HIT – HITS FROM 2014-15
DIR – EMERGING DIRECTORS

BIFF – BIFF SELECTION
CLA – CLASSICS REVISITED
DOC – DOCUMENTARY

MES – MISE-EN-SCÈNE SHORTS
AUD – AUDIENCE'S CHOICE
FAM – FOR THE FAMILY

CJE – 20 YEARS OF CJ
ENTERTAINMENT

	6PM	7PM	8PM	9PM	10PM	11PM	12AM
		OPENING GALA ODE TO MY FATHER		BFI			
	HJM	THE UNJUST	RSC	HJM	VETERAN	RSC	
	CJE	MISS GRANNY		PHC			
	DIR	SLEEPLESS NIGHT	PHC	HIT	TWENTY	OPS	
				HIT	THE PIPER + GREED; GHOST LIGHT	OPS	
	DIR	A MIDSUMMER'S FANTASIA		PHC			
	DOC	THE CITY IN THE WATER		PHC			
				AUD	THE THIEVES	OPS	CJE
							MOTHER PHH
						HJM	NEW WORLD PHR
						AUD	THE MAN FROM NOWHERE PHH
	BIFF	THE LIAR		PHC			CJE
							MEMORIES OF MURDER PHR
					MES	MISE-EN-SCÈNE 1	KCC
	BIFF	WE WILL BE OK		PHC			
	DOC	COLLAPSE		PHC			
					MES	MISE-EN-SCÈNE 2	KCC
				HIT	THE ROYAL TAILOR		OPS
	DIR	ROMANCE JOE + HARD TO SAY		PHC	MES	MISE-EN-SCÈNE 3	KCC
	DOC	THE ISLAND OF SHADOWS		RCA			
	DOC	MIRYANG ARIRANG		KCL	DIR	A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION	
	HIT	THE CLASSIFIED FILE		RSC			
					HIT	ALICE IN EARNESTLAND	
	CLA	A BONANZA		RSC	HJM	A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE	
	HIT	THE SHAMELESS		PHC			AUD
							THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE WEIRD PHH
					CLOSING GALA	LOVE AND...	RSC

BFI – BFI SOUTHBANK
PHC – PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL
PHH – PICTUREHOUSE HACKNEY

PHR – PICTUREHOUSE RITZY
OPS – ODEON PANTON STREET
OKS – ODEON KINGSTON

RSC – REGENT STREET CINEMA
RCA – ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART
KCL – KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

KCC – KOREAN CULTURAL CENTRE
SOAS – THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL
AND AFRICAN STUDIES

OPENING GALA

ODE TO MY FATHER

국제시장

MON 2 NOV 19:00
BFI SOUTHBANK NFT1



Q&A: director JK Youn, actor Hwang Jung-min,
producer Kil Young-min

DIRECTOR: JK YOUN
CAST: HWANG JUNG-MIN, KIM YUNJIN
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 12A | 126MIN

An epic, big-budget drama that played at the Berlin Film Festival 2015. The emotion is sprinkled liberally with humour among the grandiose set-pieces. Compassionate and humanistic, *Ode to My Father* is a beacon of empathetic large-scale cinema. Proustian-like in its telling, we begin in the modern day and dart back and forth into the 1950s, following the adventures of Duk-soo (Hwang Jung-min) through life's joys and travails. We meet him as a child when an entire town attempts to evacuate via the sea. Such a traumatic event changes Duk-soo's destiny, as he must take charge of his family. The themes of sacrifice and doing one's duty, for your family in particular, and fellow man-kind generally, are writ boldly. If only more blockbusters had its values.



CLOSING GALA

LOVE AND...

필름시대사랑

SAT 14 NOV 19:00
REGENT STREET CINEMA



Q&A: director Zhang Lu, actor Moon So-ri

DIRECTOR: ZHANG LU
CAST: PARK HAE-IL, AHN SUNG-KI, MOON SO-RI, HAN YE-RI
DRAMA | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 70MIN

Chinese-Korean director Zhang Lu doesn't do mainstream, and this four-chapter conundrum won't please fans of car chases or gross-out comedies. But the involvement of several top Korean stars and the sheer wit and originality of the concept makes the film funny and sad in a way that plenty of viewers will find seductive. It starts from two small (and unexpectedly linked) incidents. A young woman visits her grandfather in a mental hospital and learns that he has developed feelings for a woman who works on the ward. A junior member of a film crew dares to argue with the director about the attitudes behind his script. Not much in the way of plot, but enough to trigger a suite of variations across the four chapters. Some events are consequences of the original incidents, others are altered replays of the incidents and yet others (a Chinese translation of Borges, a *Memories of Murder* clip and much else) are digressions or footnotes. It all adds up to an exploration of dualities: colour and black-and-white, love and madness, acting and being, presence and absence. A high-protein menu, but Zhang's touch is unfailingly light.



ACTOR HWANG JUNG-MIN

Starring in over 40 films spanning 15 years, Hwang Jung-min has become one of the most important actors in Korean cinema. His films screening in the Festival include his very first film the 2001 modern classic *Waikiki Brothers* directed by Yim Soon-rye; Im Sangsoo's *A Good Lawyer's Wife*; detective action comedy *Veteran* and the Opening Gala *Ode to My Father*.

VETERAN
베테랑
TUE 3 NOV 20:20
REGENT STREET CINEMA



Q&A: actor Hwang Jung-min

DIRECTOR: RYOO SEUNG-WAN
CAST: HWANG JUNG-MIN, YOO AH-IN
ACTION, CRIME | 2015 | CERT. 15 | 124MIN

Coming from acclaimed action director Ryoo Seung-wan, *Veteran* is a fast paced and deftly comic thriller following the fast-talking, self-assured veteran police detective Do-cheol (Hwang Jung-min), a man who hardly gives a second thought to bending the rules or using his fists to solve a case. After successfully bringing an end to a car smuggling ring, he is invited to a TV show after party where he meets smarmy corporate heir Tae-oh (Yoo Ah-in) of the Sunjin Group. Do-cheol instantly takes issue with Tae-oh's rude, thuggish and arrogant behaviour and suspects him of being involved in drugs, but when he attempts to investigate him in the hope of uncovering his criminal activities, he is prevented from doing so by his superiors. However, when he receives a telephone call from the daughter of a friend who is in a coma after being beaten mercilessly by Tae-oh, Do-cheol finally decides enough is enough and sets out determined to bring an end to Tae-oh's schemes, at any cost.

NEW WORLD
신세계
FRI 6 NOV 22:45
PICTUREHOUSE RITZY



DIRECTOR: PARK HOON-JUNG
CAST: HWANG JUNG-MIN, CHOI MIN-SIK, LEE JUNG-JAE
DRAMA, THRILLER | 2012 | CERT. 18 | 134MIN

Written and directed by Park Hoon-jung (who also wrote the scripts for *The Unjust* and *I Saw the Devil*), *New World* presents a star-studded cast to tell the story of visceral battles within the gangster world as each attempt to seize control of the Goldmoon crime syndicate, following the death of its boss. Lee Joong-gu (Park Sung-woong) – in charge of operations in Seoul – and the, some would say, psychotic Jung Chung (the inimitable Hwang Jung-min) – who deals with operations outside Korea – are the standout contenders locked in a brutal head-to-head struggle for power. But with police chief Kang (Oldboy's Choi Min-sik) attempting to influence the succession to ensure the group can be controlled and undercover police officer Lee Ja-sung (Lee Jung-jae) precariously ensconced in Goldmoon's inner circle, allegiances are never guaranteed, loyalties never to be trusted. The only certainty is that blood will be spilt.

THE UNJUST
부당거래
TUE 3 NOV 18:00
REGENT STREET CINEMA



DIRECTOR: RYOO SEUNG-WAN
CAST: HWANG JUNG-MIN, RYOO SEUNG-BUM, YOO HAE-JIN
CRIME, DRAMA | 2010 | CERT. 18 | 120MIN

For his 2010 outing, director Ryoo Seung-wan, who had regularly been called 'the action kid of Korean cinema', abandoned much of the 'hip action' of his earlier films to produce a far more in-depth, eclectic thriller complete with astutely observed social commentary. *The Unjust* tells the story of police detective Choi Cheol-gi (Hwang Jung-min) whose reputation is threatened by bribery allegations relating to his family. Approached by his unscrupulous boss, Cheol-gi is promised a promotion if he finds a fall guy for a serial murder case. However, Cheol-gi's dirty deals are also under investigation by elite prosecutor Joo Yang (Ryoo Seong-bum) who decides to propose some dangerous arrangements of his own.

A GOOD LAWYER'S WIFE
바람난 가족
FRI 13 NOV 20:45
REGENT STREET CINEMA



DIRECTOR: IM SANGSOO
CAST: HWANG JUNG-MIN, MOON SO-RI, YOON YUH-JUNG
DRAMA | 2003 | CERT. 18 | 104MIN

Joo Youngjak (Hwang Jung-min) is a lawyer who is in an almost loveless marriage with former dancer Hojung (Moon So-ri). The two have little in common, aside from their adopted son Sooin, and their relationship has been for some time little more than a case of two virtually independent individuals going through the motions of a relationship. In fact, Youngjak is so self-obsessed that even though his father has been diagnosed with terminal liver failure, he concentrates most of his energy on his extra-marital affair with Yun (Baek Jung-rim). However, when he accidentally hits a drunken motorcyclist while taking a drive with his mistress, the ensuing consequences threaten to tear his already unstable family apart. Director Im Sangsoo is known for combining politics and sexuality in his film narratives. *A Good Lawyer's Wife* is a virtual definition of his work.

JUNG HAN SOK

**Actor
Hwang Jung-min:
Am I really
the character
that you have
pictured?**

17

Born in 1970, Hwang Jung-min spent the late 1990s as a theatre and musical actor and from 2000, when in his thirties, he turned his attention to film. Some may remember a 20-year-old Hwang briefly appearing in the *General's Son* (1990) as the bar manager or in *Shiri* (1998) as a member of the government's special investigative team. However, these roles were minor and his true debut came in Yim Soon-rye's feature *Waikiki Brothers* (2001).

Following the mass scale audition held to search for a new screen talent, Hwang Jung-min was selected to join *Waikiki Brothers* in an important supporting role. He played the band's drummer Gangsoo and with this film, his journey as a film actor truly began. Hwang's early films enabled him to experiment enough to establish the type of character for which he would later become renowned. These representative films, between 2000 and 2005, consisted of *Waikiki Brothers*, *Road Movie* (2002), *A Good Lawyer's Wife* (2003) and *A Bittersweet Life* (2005).

The character Gangsoo in *Waikiki Brothers* falls in love with a girl, but has her taken away by a band member who is a player. He is furious but remains an incompetent, dumb, honest-to-a-fault yet rough character. Above all, he is a pure and naive individual. He may be compared to Zampanò in Federico Fellini's *La Strada*.

Road Movie was the first film where Hwang Jung-min transcends the role of a colourful supporting character to prove that he has the capacity as a solid main actor who can maintain complex emotions and psychological states for a long time. Society seems to deny their existence and he himself is frightened to acknowledge his sexuality for fear of causing suffering to the main character, Dae-shik. Dae-shik is gay but he too is afraid to show it or even acknowledge it himself. Then he meets Suk-won (Jung Chan) and falls in love with him – something he struggles to express.

Hwang Jung-min once reported that he was attracted to the character of Dae-shik as he does not express his emotions easily. He especially liked the desperate tone of the dialogue mixed with hesitation and tears as heard in the line, 'am I allowed to love you'. These aspects of the film that Hwang Jung-min praises are closely aligned with his strengths as an actor. *Road Movie* was the film that proved that he could portray not only the tough guy but also the ambivalent and subtle emotional landscape within the tough guy.

A Good Lawyer's Wife and *A Bittersweet Life* demonstrated that Hwang Jung-min's acting range was far more diverse than some assumed. In *A Good Lawyer's Wife* he plays Joo Youngjak, who is a double-sided, paradoxical and therefore fascinating character. Deeply committed to Korean

democracy, lawyer Youngjak is intelligent, sharp and politically progressive. However, sexually he is self-indulgent, and at home he is drained. Hwang Jung-min subtly portrayed this complex character's devastated, depressed yet decadent nature as well as his sincerity and precariousness.

Hwang Jung-min himself has shared his self-evaluation several times, which can be summarised as follows. Youngjak is in fact a character that he found difficult to identify with in real life as well as difficult to sympathise or agree with, so initially he found the role difficult to understand. However, once he finished acting, he experienced a surprising satisfaction that he was able to perform a role that was so far removed from himself. Hwang Jung-min maintained for a long time that Youngjak was one of the most important roles he has played. His filmography illustrates that only satirical roles have disappeared and he continues to play variations of double-sided and multi-faceted characters.

For example, Mr. Baek in *A Bittersweet Life* was defined by Hwang Jung-min as a madman who pretended to be normal: a wonderfully cruel and evil character whose duality shines within this genre. The duality that he pays attention to is the character's simultaneous cruelty and ludicrousness. Hwang Jung-min suggested to the director that he should introduce the long knife scar next to Mr. Baek's mouth. The scar symbolises his cruelty in a traumatic way but at the same time contributes to making his trauma comical. The last scene at the ice rink, where he is being beaten up by Sun-Woo (Lee Byung-Hun), portrays this duality, showing Mr. Baek's cruel but ludicrous side very well. Hwang Jung-min demonstrates in this film that he is capable of exploring a character's emotions externally while also making them part of the film's genre.

These important films from his early career enabled Hwang Jung-min to develop the range and style of his acting. Three important aspects of his later filmography can be traced back to these early films. Despite the risk of simplification, this will hopefully illustrate the nature and strengths of his acting.

The first refers to his acting of 'the last lover, everybody's father'. Gangsoo's naivety and simplicity in *Waikiki Brothers* returns as he plays more substantial and symbolic characters. The same characteristics are evident in the lover in *You are My Sunshine* (2005) and *Man in Love* (2014). In *Ode to My Father* (2014), they are portrayed in the father's character. It is worth noting that Hwang Jung-min's filmography demonstrates that he does not play a straightforward lover or solid father figure very often. Despite this, this type of character can be said to be one of his most abiding roles, suggesting that regardless of frequency, the intensity of his acting has made

a strong impact on the audience's minds. There are common features in Hwang Jung-min's portrayal of a lover or a father: they are typically lower-class men who are pure, naive and evoke deep affection.

For example, *You are My Sunshine* is a love story between a countryside farmer and a prostitute with HIV. The question of how to persuade the audience of the love between Seok-joong (Hwang Jung-min) and Eun-ha (Jeon Doyeon) was crucial. The director expressed his quiet confidence to those who raised this problem even before filming. He explained that this was because he had the hidden jewel that is Hwang Jung-min. At the climax of the film, in the visitor's room, Seok-joong and Eun-ha are separated by a transparent barrier. Seok-joong, who attempted suicide by drinking lye, cannot even speak. It is unbearably sad to watch Seok-joong fighting simply to hold Eun-ha's hand. Hwang Jung-min is clearly one of only a few actors who is capable of taking the lead in this emotionally intense scene. He alone evokes the strength and direction of the emotions in this scene: the painful expression of attempting to speak without a voice; the frustration of being separated – the violent body movements expressing this; and the shaking of his hand as if to break through the wall in order to hold hers. It is Hwang Jung-min's strength of acting these emotions that eventually persuades us to surrender to this film.

If Hwang Jung-min portrayed the last lover in *You are My Sunshine*, in *Ode to My Father* he portrays everybody's father. He asked the director what the film was about when he was offered the part, and the director replied that it was a film about fathers and Hwang Jung-min immediately agreed. In truth, *Ode to My Father* uses *Forrest Gump* as a benchmark to a great extent. The director himself also mentioned this early on. However, there is a difference. In *Forrest Gump*, Tom Hanks reminisces about his heroic tales as a lover of one woman, but Hwang Jung-min in *Ode to My Father* recollects his story as somebody's father.

The second main feature of Hwang Jung-min's acting is the portrayal of the 'man who becomes a small hero'. The simple and naive characters that Hwang Jung-min plays are often transformed from ordinary, often working class citizens to local heroes. In this respect we may be able to find a relationship between two seemingly unrelated films *Ode to My Father* and *Fists of Legend* (2012), a film about a widowed father who runs a small restaurant and looks after his daughter, becoming a hero in the martial arts world.

Strictly speaking, between 2006 and 2009, Hwang Jung-min seems to have experienced a brief slump. He often appeared in substandard films, chose colourless characters and therefore his acting seemed mediocre. However, during this period, *A Man who was Superman* (2008), in which

he plays a local hero, can be seen as the seed for his future works.

The film concerns a man who suffers from psychological difficulties after losing his family in an accident. He believes that he was superman before the accident. In this film the man is unable to save the world or the country but busies himself in trying to solve the town's minor problems. In fact he remains a harmless oddball in this town, but at the same time he plays the role of an allegoric, small hero who encourages ordinary people to think about justice and morality. Eventually, this leads to *Blades of Blood* (2010) where he plays Hwang Jeong-hak, the blind warrior who attempts a revolution by awakening the civilians, and *Dancing Queen* (2012) where he plays a kind but poor human rights lawyer who overnight finds himself as the Seoul mayoral candidate.

Hwang Jung-min's hero is different from the type portrayed by Choi Minshik in *Roaring Currents* (2014). For example, Admiral Yi Sun-shin is a firm and determined man who punishes a poor soldier, who disobeys a military order, by beheading him. However, Hwang Jeong-hak in *Blades of Blood* is a flawed yet affectionate old man. In *Dancing Queen* Hwang Jung-min plays a vulnerable and unambitious character who is willing to sacrifice his widely recognised political honour for his wife, whom he loves. Hwang Jung-min does not act the traditional type of hero who advocates removing oneself from human relationships in order to become cool-headed. The type of small hero he plays is a flawed one entangled in human affairs and this feels rather familiar to the audience.

The third main aspect of Jung-min's acting is one in which he has excelled most recently: the 'resolute general who fights against a repressive environment'. This shines through in the films *The Unjust* (2010), *Moby Dick* (2011) and *Veteran* (2015).

In an interview with *Cine21* after filming *The Unjust*, Hwang Jung-min described growing in confidence when he realised that he was able to do this type of acting. He said that he had discovered new feelings within himself as a result that he had been thinking about 'acting that is not acting'. In *The Unjust* he reached a new understanding of his potential, and this clearly was a pivotal turning-point in his acting career.

At this stage, previous threads of his acting career return, albeit with a subtle transformation. For example, would it be far-fetched to suggest that Dae-shik from *Road Movie* returns in *The Unjust*? Specifically, Dae-shik's emotional state. Dae-shik in *Road Movie* and Choi Cheol-gi in *The Unjust* are both characters who struggle internally when finding themselves in a repressive environment. Hwang Jung-min plays a character who is alone in opposing repression. Here it becomes evident what he means by 'acting that is not acting', portraying

a character whose exterior and interior are very different. For example, how different is the detective he portrays in *Bloody Tie* (2006) and in *The Unjust*? In *Bloody Tie* he plays a rough detective with turbulent emotions whereas in *The Unjust*, he excels in conveying both a wicked grimace and an anxious smile.

In *The Unjust*, *Moby Dick* and *Veteran*, Hwang Jung-min plays resolute generals who find themselves in a similar situation. A vast situational trap engulfs them where it is difficult to find the courage to fight. They not only become trapped but find themselves centre stage in this trap. Others typically surrender to this overwhelming situation. However, the generals he plays are somewhat different. These characters attempt to turn the trap to their advantage by putting forward a vicious and counterattacking negotiation (*The Unjust*), investigate and confront the leader but fail (*Moby Dick*), or persevere and succeed in tearing a hole in this trap (*Veteran*).

It is not at all important what jobs these resolute generals have. Nor does it matter whether they are benign or evil. It is also not important whether they are unhappy or happy, or whether they succeed or fail. Only one thing is important: when faced with the repressive power of the environment, they wildly attempt to negotiate, investigate or fight. I refer to them as 'they', but there is of course only one actor who has played them: Hwang Jung-min.

Hwang Jung-min is well known in Korean cinema as an actor who is competent, enthusiastic and takes the initiative. He has many ideas and shares his numerous opinions. Above all, he constantly asks the director, 'Am I really the character that you have pictured?' He not only asks the director but frequently other crew members as well. He wants to know whether he is portraying the character properly, asking to be stimulated in order to understand the character and fundamentally curious about what type of character he is creating. In that respect, the few aspects of his acting world put forward here are probably not important to him. For him, only the character's current state that he plays for each film is relevant. However, as always, he has new projects lined up when he has finished filming or preparing for a new release. He will have asked, 'Am I really the character that you have pictured?' and will continue to ask this. What I have put forward here is an answer to his question. It is an answer based on his previous films, so it is necessarily a temporary one that may be subject to change. I simply wished to say, Hwang Jung-min, you have at least lived these characters.

Translated by Roh Se-hyun

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HITS FROM 2014-15

This strand looks to bring some of the biggest box office hits and the award-winning films to the UK with a wide array of interesting, thrilling and poetic stories. Films in this section include the gripping crime thriller *The Classified File*, based on a 1978 Busan kidnapping case; Oh Seung-uk's *The Shameless*, a hard-boiled melodrama between a detective, who never realized that what they had was love, and a killer's lover, who wanted to believe it was; and *Twenty*, a radiant comedy about three best friends.

THE CLASSIFIED FILE
극비수사
THU 12 NOV 18:30
REGENT STREET CINEMA



DIRECTOR: KWAK KYUNG-TAEK
CAST: KIM YUN-SEOK, YOO HAE-JIN
DRAMA, CRIME | 2015 | CERT. 15 | 108MIN

Kwak's magnificent thriller recreates a real-life Busan kidnapping case from 1978, and opens with a whirlwind montage of student protests, news clips and pop-culture imagery to evoke time under military government – and the police corruption that was rampant. Eun-joo, young daughter of a wealthy magnate, is kidnapped on her way home from school. At first, her desperate parents hear nothing; they request that the weary, seen-it-all cop Gil-yong (Kim Yun-seok) be assigned to the case and, to Gil-yong's annoyance, also bring in the psychic Joong-san (Yoo Hae-jin) to help. The kidnapper finally does make contact, but several attempts to pay him a ransom hit brick walls. 33 days after Eun-joo's disappearance, matters come to a head up north in Seoul, where Gil-yong finds his efforts sabotaged by rival sections of the force. Can Joong-san's intuitions help? *The Classified File* often has the feel of a drama-doc and is nothing like *Memories of Murder*, but it uses a police investigation as a key to important truths about Korean society in much the way that Bong Joon Ho's film did. Kwak Kyung-taek has always been at his best when digging into Busan histories, and this is likely his most resonant work yet. And the suspense is killing.

THE SHAMELESS
무뢰한
FRI 13 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



DIRECTOR: OH SEUNG-UK
CAST: JEON DO-YEON, KIM NAM-GIL
NOIR, ROMANCE | 2015 | CERT. 18 | 118MIN

A crime drama about emotional evisceration. Criminal enforcer Joon-gil (Park Sung-wong) has murdered a man the audience never meets. Motivation is extrapolated: the victim was threatening his lover, Hye-kyung (Jeon Do-yeon). Now hunted by his former employer, a shady influential corporation, which has the ear of the corrupter elements of the police force, the authorities also want him. Detective Jae-gon (Kim Nam-gil) is assigned. Not bribable, but also with a reputation for going beyond the strict rule of law, Jae-gon tracks down Joon-gil. The first of two action sequences unfurls excitingly. Cop fear of the suspect means an unusual attempt at subduing, which goes wrong and Joon-gil escapes. The rest of the runtime is Jae-gon undercover seeking to rectify his mistake. The lone wolf pursuit of the target is not concerned with conventional thriller dynamics here, instead *The Shameless* is more interested in the moral bankruptcy of society and no one we meet in the film is without tarnish.

THE ROYAL TAILOR
상의원
MON 9 NOV 20:30
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: LEE WONSUK
CAST: HAN SEOK-KYU, KO SOO, PARK SHIN-HYE, YOO YEON-SEOK
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 15 | 127MIN

Dol-Suk (Han Suk-kyu) is the head designer of the Sanguiwon, those responsible for the attire of royals in the palace. His unsurpassed skill and strict adherence to the rules of royal couture has led to him being highly regarded in the palace to the extent that his elevation to nobleman stature is imminent and almost guaranteed. The appearance in the royal household of maverick designer Kong-jin (Ko Soo) – brought to the palace by nobleman Pan-soo (Ma Dong-seok) – initially causes Dol-suk little more than minor irritation. However, as Kong-jin's innovative clothing designs become increasingly popular with royals and commoners alike, not only does Dol-suk begin to see him as a threat to the future he has worked so hard to secure but this young, carefree man's repeated flouting of long-held couture rules also threatens to change the entire royal household forever. With 60% of the budget for *The Royal Tailor* spent on sets and costumes, this film is an absolute must-see on the big screen.

TWENTY
스물
WED 4 NOV 20:30
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: LEE BYEONG-HEON
CAST: KIM WOO-BIN, LEE JUN-HO, KANG HA-NEUL
COMEDY, DRAMA | 2015 | CERT. 15 | 115MIN

Chi-ho (Kim Woo-bin), Dong-woo (Lee Joon-ho) and Gyeong-jae (Kang Ha-neul) have been friends since their high school days, when their attraction to the same girl brought them together. Chi-ho is obsessed with chasing women even though he already has a girlfriend, So-min (Jung So-min); Dong-woo is a talented comic artist but family money pressures force him into dead-end, part-time jobs; and Gyeong-jae is a freshman in college who soon falls in love with Jin-joo (Min Hyo-rin), a student who is also an expert in finance. Now that they have all reached the age of twenty, the realisation that the world is open for them to do what they want, become whatever they want, and have fun doing it, is becoming increasingly apparent. The biggest problem for each is deciding what they truly want. A film with steamy romance, hardships of youth and laugh-out-loud moments.

ALICE IN EARNESTLAND
성실한 나라의 앨리스
THU 12 NOV 20:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



DIRECTOR: AHN GOOC-JIN
CAST: LEE JEONG-HYUN, LEE HAE-YOUNG, SEO YOUNG-HWA
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 18 | 90MIN

A giddy concoction of social satire and surreal violence, *Alice in Earnestland* wastes no time in grabbing the audience by the lapels. Leading lady Su-nam (Lee Jeong-hyun) bursts into a psychotherapist's office and takes Gyeong-suk (Seo Young-hwa) prisoner. Once tied up, and force-fed a sliver of raw meat, Su-nam begins to recount to her captive audience how she came to be committing this criminal act. The backstory is a whirlwind, delivered breathlessly. The film has anger, railing against modern urban manifestations of the obnoxious. But do not worry, *Alice in Earnestland* is far from a dour experience, a different tone is taken: the humour of frustration relieved through destructive happenstance. Debutant writer-director Ahn Goo-jin delivers a mischievous anti-heroine comedy.

THE PIPER
손님
THU 5 NOV 20:30
ODEON PANTON STREET

+
Short
Film



**GREED;
GHOST LIGHT**
도깨비 불

Short Film

DIRECTOR: KIM NA-KYUNG
CAST: JEON WOON-JONG, LEE SU-MIN,
KIM I-JEUNG
DRAMA | 2015 | 24MIN

Hyong-won is obsessed with ghosts. While walking home one night he finds an injured man on the street and takes him home to allow him to recover. The next day, the man has vanished leaving a box full of money for Hyong-won and his wife, leading Hyong-won to believe the man was a Dokaebi (a ghost of fortune who can make money by using a magic club). Engulfed by greed, Hyong-won decides to trap the Dokaebi, steal his club and get all the money he could wish for.

DIRECTOR: KIM GWANG-TAE
CAST: RYU SEUNG-RYONG, LEE SUNG-MIN, CHUN WOO-HEE, LEE JOON
THRILLER, HORROR | 2014 | CERT. 15 | 108MIN

A bloody update of the Brothers Grimm fairy tale, The Pied Piper of Hamelin. In the not too distant aftermath of the Korean War, a father and his 10-year old son stumble across a remote, beatific village on the way to Seoul. Instantaneously unsettling, despite the gorgeous surroundings, the villagers have, if not a horror movie malevolence at least a concerning weariness. The chief has tricked them into believing the war is still raging, and, alternating between fear and superstition, keeps the denizens in line. Murmurs of disquiet at their cooped up lives slowly find voice in the Piper's good deed that alleviates their hardship. Wanting the status quo maintained, the chief cooks up stomach-tightening treachery. Tension comes from the impending collateral damage. A parable on mob mindlessness.

HUH MOON YUNG

Korean Cinema in the 2000s

31

Korean cinema has changed rapidly in the last twenty years. In the 1960s, the Korean film industry was spectacular but from 1970 onwards, the authoritarian government stifled creativity through its use of tough censorship and regulations, a situation which lasted for twenty years. It was only in the 1990s that Korean cinema was able to awaken from its long hibernation. The decade starting from 1995 could be called the renaissance of Korean cinema. The emergence of numerous and remarkable talents became the driving force for its new beginning and established the foundations of the cinema industry. Film culture became reinvigorated as films started competing (and winning awards) in prestigious international film festivals. The decade from 2005 could be called the industrialisation period. The cinema industry was reorganised from individual producers to being centred around large conglomerates, which resulted in film production becoming increasingly focused on blockbusters.

THE COUNTRY THAT WATCHES THE MOST FILMS IN THE WORLD?

In the 21st century, South Korea has one of the most rapidly developing film industries. In 2000, the 61 million cinemagoers had increased to 215 million by 2014. During the same period, production of domestic films increased from 57 to 217 and screen numbers increased from 720 to 2281 – both threefold increases. The total sales figure for 2014 was over 2 trillion South Korean won. (In 2005, it was just over 1 and-a-half trillion won). Of course, in terms of rate of growth it cannot compare to China. The Chinese cinema industry recorded an unbelievable 64.3% growth rate in 2010 and since the late 2000s; its film industry continues to increase annually by approximately 30%, demonstrating a phenomenal growth. Given that the annual cinema attendance per capita was 0.6 in 2014, it is expected that the Chinese cinema industry's meteoric growth will continue for some time. However, excluding China, it is difficult to find another country other than South Korea that has demonstrated such a steep growth in their film industry in the 21st century.

In 2000, annual cinema attendance in South Korea per capita was 1.3. However, in 2005, this increased over twofold to 2.95 in just 5 years; in 2013, it was 4.17 and in 2014, 4.19. It is important to point out that this figure is especially high. In 2013, the American annual cinema attendance per capita was 4.0, French 3.14, British 2.61 and Japanese 1.22. In India, the country that makes the highest number of films (1602 films in 2013), it was 1.55.

Purely based on this statistic, Koreans today watch the most films in the world. This also signals that the Korean cinema industry's growth has reached its limit. Given that other than the US, there are no other countries where films are substantially exported to, it may be true to say that the period of rapid growth for the Korean cinema industry has reached its peak.

What contributed to the Korean cinema industry's phenomenal growth rate and the country's high annual cinema attendance per capita? There are no clear answers that have yet been put forward. One possible factor is the Korean government's film policy. Korean cinemas are legally obliged to maintain the Screen Quota (screening of Korean films at least 73 days per year) and people in film have received diverse financial aid from the Korean Film Council, local Film Commissions, local autonomous organisations and international film festivals. With the exception of China which implements a strong policy on limiting the import of foreign films, South Korea demonstrates one of the most determined promotion policies for domestic films.

These policies enabled domestic films to occupy top positions in cinema sales. In 2013, South Korean films consisted of 59.7% of total cinema sales. With the exception of particular countries such as the US (94.6%) and India (94.0%), South Korea alongside, China (58.6%) and Japan (60.6%), is a rare example of a country in which domestic films are equal to or superior to sales of American films. (In 2013, domestic films accounted for 33.8% of total sales in France, and in the UK, including co-produced films, the figure is as low as 22.1%).

In addition, it was with both the abolition of censorship and the emergence of many young talents that significantly contributed to the growth of a new era for the South Korean film industry. The per capita annual film attendance seems to be now approaching its peak though and with the tendency for less governmental support for many young Korean filmmakers' political stands it suggests to me that continuing this growth may face a big challenge.

THE PARADE OF BLOCKBUSTERS

In Korea, there is a phrase called the 'ten million film', referring to a film that has been seen by over 10 million people. Currently, in September 2015, the South Korean population is approximately 51,460,000, so it is reasonable to think that it would be very rare that 20% of the country's population has watched the same film. However, in South Korea, this is not the case. There are currently 17 'ten million films', all released in the 2000s. Of these,

four are American and thirteen are Korean. There were two in 2012, two in 2013, four in 2014 and three so far in 2015; clearly the trend is increasing. The outstanding example is perhaps, *Roaring Currents* (2014), which was seen by more than 17 million people, a staggering figure consisting of 1/3 of the entire population.

The increasing number of 'ten million films' indicates that the recent growth of the Korean cinema industry relies on the success of such films. Without them, it would have been impossible for the annual cinema attendance per capita to have increased beyond four films. However, there are also side effects from the increase of the 'ten million films'. First is the problem of such films monopolising the screens. These blockbusters often take up over half of the available screening-slots in cinemas and take away any opportunity for other films to be shown. The Korean policy of Screen Quotas has always been implemented not merely as a policy to protect its domestic films but to advocate diversity. The monopoly of the screens by a small number of films threatens this and this is an issue that the Korean cinema industry is currently grappling with.

A more fundamental issue lies in the polarisation that takes place in the film production stage. As investors and producers focus on blockbusters that have a higher chance of success, medium scale films become less attractive. If this trend continues, some have argued that medium scale films may be squeezed out. Currently South Korean cinema's diversity is being challenged in terms of both film production and screening.

THE DIMINISHING INFLUENCE OF PRODUCERS

Korean audiences, sitting in the cinema anticipating the feature film to be shown, may notice something peculiar in Korean films lately. In the opening credits, the first people who appear are mostly investors. Production Investor, Responsible for Investment, Manager of Investment: it is hard to know what these people do and their job titles convey nothing other than the fact that they are related to the investors. Sometimes there are several people with each job title. Only after all their names have appeared, the 'traditionally' important staff members - cinematography, production design, music and editing - are introduced.

Around five years ago, it would have been hard to find this type of generalised opening credits in other country's films. This points to the increasingly powerful positions of investors when trying to make a film in South Korea.

Of course, the strengthening of investors' influences is not unique to Korea, neither is it a recent phenomenon. In the mid-1980s, American film director Robert Altman lamented that artists have now left American cinema, and that accountants and insurance company workers run American films.

However, it is worthwhile to note that investors' influences in South Korea have risen in a short space of time. This is in stark contrast with the producer's influence rapidly diminishing at the same time. From the mid-1990s, South Korean cinema underwent a renaissance. Around this time, the government's longstanding regulations around censorship began dissolving and brilliant directors - Hong Sangsoo, Park Chan-wook, Kim Ki-duk and Lee Chang-dong - began to emerge. However, the role of the gifted producers cannot be ignored either. Young producers born in early 1960s - Kang Woo-suk, Cha Seung-jae and Shim Jae-myung - made films that were not only commercially successful, but artistic as well. The young audience in the 1990s applauded and embraced the emergence of such films. One film magazine annually published a list of the 'Powermen of the Korean Cinema Industry' and the same names remained at the top for almost a decade. Investors lined up to fund their films.

In 2005, this changed. As the so-called blockbuster mentality started to dominate the Korean cinema landscape as well, the production costs per film soared and many producers combined their production companies with financial capital, or conglomerate companies, in order to cover the skyrocketing costs. As it became the norm for film production to focus on blockbusters, independent producers also had to increasingly rely on investors. This is how producers and investors came to swap their statuses. Consequently, producers' ability to influence the film production process continued to diminish and the hands-on investors' influence grew. The aforementioned film magazine stopped publishing their 'powermen' list.

The result of this phenomenon is not limited to the change in opening credits, of course. The producers of the 1990s not only wanted to make successful films, but also invested in discovering and promoting new, talented filmmakers. For example, Cha Seung-jae recognised that director Bong Joon Ho would be able to create successful and profitable work, despite Bong having no commercial track-record. Cha became the producer for Bong's debut film *Barking Dogs Never Bite* (2000). However, such experimental attempts inevitably become more difficult within an investor-centred system. Currently in Korean cinema, stories of the hands-on investors interfering with a film's (especially a first time director's) length of a shot is no longer

new. In the late 2000s, the production costs of debut films for new, young directors were relatively low, they focused on horror films (which already had an established audience), and Hong Sangsoo, Kim Ki-duk and Lee Chang-dong left mainstream cinema to establish their own production companies.

With the exception of 79-year-old director Im Kwon-taek, Director Hong Sangsoo, Kim Ki-duk, Lee Chang-dong, Park Chan-wook, Bong Joon Ho, Im Sangsoo, Ryoo Seung-wan and Kim Jee-woon, who have all been invited to numerous international film festivals and are acknowledged as the stars of South-Korean cinema, made their debut films between 1996 and 2000. However, since 2005, it has become very rare to see such talent emerge. Although this cannot solely be attributed to the decline of the producer's influence, it is not unreasonable to suggest that they are related. This is the hidden shadow of the rapid growth of the Korean cinema industry.

THE PLACE OF KOREAN CINEMA IN THE MAP OF INTERNATIONAL CINEMA

Prior to Im Kwon-taek's *Chunhyang* (2000) being in competition at the 2000 Cannes International Film Festival, not a single Korean film had competed at this festival since its inception in 1946. Although the Cannes International Film Festival's selection criteria cannot be the absolute standard, this fact indicates that SouthKorean cinema did not have a place on the map of international cinema, which was mainly drawn up by western film scholars and critics. In the 1996 'Oxford History of World Cinema' (Oxford University Press), Korean cinema is not mentioned at all, similarly to other numerous international film history publications.

From 2000, this began to change. In 2002, Im Kwon-taek won the Best Director Prize at Cannes for *Chunhyang*, Park Chan-wook won Grand Prize of the Jury with *Old Boy*, and the Jury Prize for *Thirst* in 2009. Lee Chang-dong's *Secret Sunshine* (2007) won Best Actress (Jeon Do-yeon), and *Poetry* (2010) won Best Screenplay (Lee Chang-dong). Despite not being awarded, Director Hong Sangsoo's three films and Im Sangsoo's two films also were in competition at Cannes. Director Kim Ki-duk's *Samaria* (2004) won Best Director at the Berlin International Film Festival, *3-Iron* (2004) Best Director and *Pieta* (2012) the Golden Lion Award. This illustrates how Korean films in the 2000s received unprecedented acclaim at international film festivals.

Has success at international film festivals in the last decade finally put South Korea on the map of international cinema? It is difficult to answer

this definitively yet. The British film magazine *Sight & Sound* publishes 'The greatest films of all time' every decade from a poll answered by international film critics and directors. In the list published in December 2012, there are no SouthKorean films in the top 100. This is, of course, predictable. The magazine also publishes annual top 10 lists, in which SouthKorean cinema fares little better. Indeed, between 2000-2010, only six Asian films were included (with Wong Kar-Wai's *In the Mood for Love*, topping the poll in 2000). In fact, the only SouthKorean film mentioned in the polling was Im Kwon-taek's *Mandara* from 1981.

Of course, there is no need to take this list too seriously. This list will continually be updated and edited, and as it has been, many films will be rediscovered by future generations. However, it can be surmised that many renowned film experts all over the world do not consider Korean film at the forefront of film aesthetics.

It may be important to re-examine the expression, 'Korean cinema'. Expressions such as Korean film, Indian film and British film all contain a subtle duality. This refers to the difficult question of whether the terms Korean, Indian and British refer to something beyond nationalities but also point to meaningful similarities. The hasty rush to generalise films made in one region have become a type of preconception to overlook each work's uniqueness. Any film's 'regionality' does not stop at simply marking its nationality or geography, but a certain form of 'regionality' is inscribed in individual films. Then, what kind of cinema is Korean cinema?

Since the 1990s, international cinema started to pay attention to Asian cinema. Taiwan's Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Edward Yang, Iran's Abbas Kiarostami and Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Hong Kong's Wong Kar-Wai and Johnnie To as well as China's Jia Zhangke and Wang Bing are all new giants who were discovered during this period. In the 2000s, Korean cinema took flight at the same time that the work of Asian directors such as Apitchatpong Weerasethakul, Lav Diaz, and Raya Martin also began to gain prominence. However, there is a difference between Korean films and other country's films. For example, Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Edward Yang can be perceived as aesthetic brothers, working within the same lineage of Taiwanese New Wave. Both Jia Zhangke and Wang Bing grapple with the same question of the camera's place within Chinese society in the face of rapid and overwhelming social change.

What common qualities do Korean directors share? What internal boundaries have been marked in Hong Sangsoo's, Bong Joon Ho's and Lee Chang-

dong's films, as well as Park Chan-wook's and Kim Ki-duk's? An immediate answer does not come to mind; rather, it appears that they do not share any commonalities. This may be why Hong Sangsoo's and Kim Ki-duk's films are referred to as being part of European modernism (Hong Sangsoo is frequently referred to as Korea's Éric Rohmer) and Park Chanwook's and Bong Joon Ho's films (and at times Kim Ki-duk's too) as 'Asia's extreme movies'. SouthKorean cinema is an assembly of diverse films which are difficult to categorise within one 'region'. This contributes to the difficulty of finding a place for South-Korean cinema on the international cinema.

THE MANY FACES OF KOREAN CINEMA

Korean cinema today is impossible to be summarised into several characteristics and has many strands co-existing simultaneously. However, risking crude simplification, a categorisation would reveal four different types of films (Independent films also deserve a mention in their own right but due to the limitations of this discussion, it is with regret that they are not included here).

First are films with national realism. The father being, without a doubt, Im Kwon-taek. This master who has long represented Korean cinema used to focus on mainstream films in his early career. However, since the mid-1970s, he has fought for the aesthetic modernisation of nationalistic films and released his 102nd film *Revivre* in 2014. Lee Chang-dong can be seen as the heir. Occupying the opposite end of film entertainment, moralist Lee Chang-dong has remained silent since *Poetry* (2010). Im Sangsoo's *The Housemaid* (2010) and *The Taste of Money* (2012) are wilder but can be included here too. These films focus on the region of Korea and its historical events and social irregularities. There is also the commonality of themes being prioritised over form and style. It remains to be seen whether the new generation of directors will continue making films in this vein.

The second group is difficult to label so let's provisionally refer to them as films with 'intimism'. (This label does not share history of art and literature's particular reference but is used for its entire meaning.) Hong Sansoo's and Kim Ki-duk's films are representative examples. They do not focus on regional history or reality but mankind's fundamental awareness, problems of desire and life's universal conditions to create their own forms and styles. Their films do not separate form and theme. Compared to other directors, they make films with low budgets within a short space of time and are prolific. Hong Sangsoo has made 17 feature films, Kim Ki-duk 21.

However, their differences outweigh their commonalities. Hong Sang-soo attempts to reform style to approach a new reality whereas Kim Ki-duk focuses on the issue of achieving salvation through physical pain. There are currently very younger directors making films in this style; they have yet to receive international attention.

The third category belongs to films that innovate genres. Directors Park Chan-wook, Bong Joon Ho, Kim Jee-woon and Ryoo Seung-wan, have all received relatively equal public support and critical acclaim. They tend to be film maniacs themselves, and share the experience of being seduced by B-movies. Their films are mainly thrillers or have action at the centre, and combine this with other genres, such as horror or comedy. They are audience-friendly yet also appear stubborn in maintaining their style. However, there are also many differences between them. Park Chan-wook attempts to reinterpret Greek tragedy into genre film, and Bong Joon Ho combines local politics with the dynamics of the genre. Ryoo Seung-wan and Kim Jee-woon maintain a playful stance even when using society's real-life issues as their subjects. Bong Joon Ho's *The Host* (2006) and Ryoo Seung-wan's *Veteran* (2015) also joined the ten million films list. Many aspiring Korean filmmakers perceive their films as model examples. Of the younger generation, Director Na Hong-jin who made *The Chaser* (2008) and *The Yellow Sea* (2010) is another example.

The fourth type refers to mainstream genre films and encompasses the largest number of directors. A longstanding representative is Kang Woo-suk and since the mid-2000s, Choi Dong-hoon, who has made two ten million films and JK Youn are also forerunners. Choi Dong-hoon's five films have all been successful, from his debut film *The Big Swindle* (2004) to his latest film *Assassination* (2015), he has become one of Korea's best mainstream directors.

Out of these categories, it is difficult to say which represents Korean cinema most accurately. Films of such a diverse nature are shaping Korea's diverse and complicated cinema landscape.

Translated by Roh Se-hyun

EMERGING DIRECTORS

PROGRAMMER'S NOTES

A new section in this year's LKFF focuses attention on two young directors who have made their mark with their first few films. We're not really sticking our necks out here: these are films that have already won significant acclaim (prizes, even) at home and abroad. The idea is to celebrate outstanding young talents who are likely to become major figures in Korean cinema in the coming years. We expect to welcome both directors to the LKFF this year.

Lee Kwang-kuk worked as assistant to the great Hong Sangsoo on several films, and something of Hong's idiosyncratic approach to storytelling has rubbed off on him. Like his former mentor, Lee is fascinated by gardens of forking paths: the way that stories can twist, turn and double back on themselves to create 'cubist' versions of reality in which what could or should have happened has the same weight as what did happen. He announced his distinctive, humorous approach in *Romance Joe*, about a blocked writer whose present-day encounters and memories of childhood get tangled up in a knot of dreams and paradoxes. He followed up with the delightful short *Hard to Say* and then with the wonderful new feature *A Matter of Interpretation*, which takes the meaning of dreams into areas that Freud never even imagined.

Jang Kun-jae trained as a cinematographer, and his films as director have mined a rich seam of autobiographical experiences. His prize-winning debut *Eighteen* (2009) (not in our programme this year) looked back at a misspent youth, and *Sleepless Night* (2013) drew on his own experience of marriage to present a disarmingly real picture of youthful married life. Both films reveal an almost uncanny ability to turn lived, first-hand experience into understated – but-gripping drama; his images are similarly unshowy but seductive. His latest film *A Midsummer's Fantasia* (2014) was shot in Japan and became the indie hit of the year when it was released in Korea a few months ago. This time he's exploring the roots of his own creativity, first showing the experiences of a Korean in rural Japan, then transmuting those experiences into the stuff of fiction.

Tony Rayns

A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION

꿈보다 해몽

WED 11 NOV 20:30

PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: director Lee Kwang-kuk, film critic Tony Rayns

DIRECTOR: LEE KWANG-KUK
CAST: YU JUN-SANG, SHIN DONG-MI, KIM KANG-HYUN
DRAMA | 2015 | CERT. 15 | 99MIN

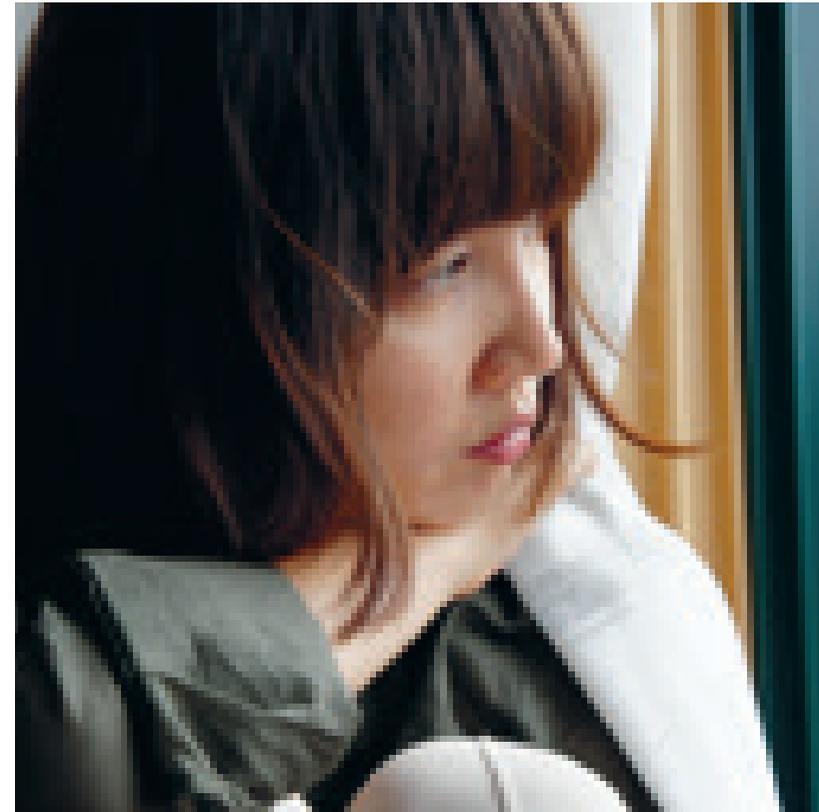
Imagine Woody Allen, at his most playful, making a film in Arirang, South Korea, about struggling theatre actors striving to make it, while also trying to decipher their dreams after sleep. Gently surreal and drily funny, *A Matter of Interpretation* has the narrative intricacies of an early Hong Sangsoo. A detective, who has a gift for interpreting dreams, bumps into the budding thespians and sheds enlightenment. Career and romantic frustrations plague the characters, and the film aims to decode modern day dejection. Dextrous, and with the lightest of touches, *A Matter of Interpretation* signals a new talent to watch out for in writer-director Lee Kwang-kuk. Humorous melancholy has a new champion.

ROMANCE JOE

로맨스 조

TUE 10 NOV 18:30

PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



HARD TO SAY 말로는 힘들어

Short Film

DIRECTOR: LEE KWANG-KUK
CAST: KIM SAE-BYUK, LEE DAL
DRAMA, COMEDY, ROMANCE | 2012 |
CERT. 12A | 25MIN

Q&A: director Lee Kwang-kuk, film critic Tony Rayns

DIRECTOR: LEE KWANG-KUK
CAST: KIM YOUNG-PIL, SHIN DONG-MI, LEE CHAI-EUN, LEE DAVID
BLACK COMEDY | 2013 | CERT. 15 | 115MIN

Romance Joe is a deeply surreal and thought provoking tale in which characters relate stories of characters relating stories of characters. Seo-dam (Kim Dong-hyeon) tells a story about film director Lee (Jo Han-cheol) to an elderly couple. Lee is left stranded in a small town to force him to finish his latest script. Racked with writer's block, he orders coffee to be delivered to his room and begins a conversation with the feisty delivery girl, Ri-ji (Shin Dong-mi) when she arrives. On hearing that she is a fan of his previous film, Lee agrees to pay for the girl to stay with him through the night and as they talk she begins to relate the tale of Romance Joe, (Kim Young-pil). In her story, Romance Joe is working as an assistant director on a film when actress Joo-hyun commits suicide leading him to quit his job and contemplate ending it all himself. Soon layer within layer blurs the line between fantasy and reality, between story and storyteller.

When a young girl has her nervous, romantic advances spurned because she cannot find the words to express her feelings, she takes a dejected walk through a wooded area. Finding an abandoned guitar, she begins a surreal and beautifully gentle journey of the imagination to glimpse the loving relationship she longs for and prove she is not the only one who finds words hard to say.

A MIDSUMMER'S FANTASIA
한여름의 판타지아
THU 5 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: director Jang Kun-jae, film critic Tony Rayns

DIRECTOR: JANG KUN-JAE
CAST: KIM SAE-BYUK, IWASE RYO, LIM HYUNG-KOOK
DRAMA | 2015 | CERT. PG | 96MIN

A Korean director (Lim Hyung-kook) travels to the Japanese town of Gojo to scout for locations for his next film. He is joined by his assistant director, Mi-jung (Kim Sae-byuk), who interprets for him and together they tour the area, interacting with locals along the way. Soon, a story of romance told in the early stages of the film takes centre stage as a Korean actress (again Mi-jung) meets a local farmer. Together, the two take a gentle journey around the town, slowly opening up to each other, finding areas of commonality along the way. More than anything else, *A Midsummer's Fantasia* details the often desperate search for human to human connection.

SLEEPLESS NIGHT
잠 못 드는 밤
WED 4 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: director Jang Kun-jae, film critic Tony Rayns

DIRECTOR: JANG KUN-JAE
CAST: KIM SOO-HYUN, KIM JOO-RYOUNG
DRAMA | 2013 | CERT. 18 | 65MIN

Hyunsoo (Kim Soo-hyun) and Joohee (Kim Joo-ryoung) have been happily married for two years. Having both reached their mid-thirties, the pressure to have a baby – fuelled by those around them – is growing on a daily basis but financial worries make the thought of an addition to their family almost a frightening prospect. As their conversations on the subject continue, a disagreement over pay at Hyunsoo's work causes him to quit his job while Joohee finds her bike has been stolen. With everyday life pressures mounting, the couple's loving conversations edge ever closer to argument. Nuanced and subtle throughout, watching *Sleepless Night* is like watching real life unfold.

BIFF SELECTION



BUSAN
International Film Festival

PROGRAMMER'S NOTES

LKFF will introduce six Korean movies which attracted public attention at the 2014 Busan International Film Festival. First up on the LKFF list are *End of Winter* and *We Will Be Ok*, the winners of the New Currents Award in the representative competition at the 2014 BIFF. Both of the films are their directors' debut. *End of Winter* was invited to the Forum section of the Berlin International Film Festival and *We Will Be Ok* was selected for the Seoul Independent Film Festival after the 2014 BIFF. The film *End of Winter* depicts a journey of two days and three nights taken by an estranged family with a mother, two sons and their wives who are gathering together for the retirement ceremony of their father, who worked as a teacher for his whole life. When heavy snow forces the bus to stop in Cheolwon, Gangwon Province, they reluctantly have to spend time together and even sleep in the same space. The film was favourably reviewed for its calming portrait of a Korean family who had grown apart from each other. *We Will Be Ok* by director Baek Jae-ho is a movie about shooting a film. The story's main character is a would-be director as well as an unknown actor. Baek Jae-ho has created a work of art which combines the two different perspectives of the director's own honest story and the film that is being shot in the movie in a very unique way. The line "Why do they live in such a relaxed way even though they don't have much time left?" must be a question to himself, and *We Will Be Ok* gives a brave answer to that question.

The four films shown in the Vision section at the 2014 BIFF are worthy of notice. The film *Wild Flowers*, which is the first work by director Park Suk-young, depicts a runaway girl and her life. There are several Korean films that portray runaway teenagers but the film *Wild Flowers* views the lives of runaway girls from a different angle. The girls are driven into extreme conditions which threaten their lives without even a chance to express their hostility against the established social order. The director looks at these girls, who are not protected at all by Korean society, with a warm gaze. Her role in *Wild Flowers* won Cho Soo-hyang the Actress of the Year in the 2014 BIFF. *The Liar* by Kim Dong-myung is also a story about a woman. The main character, Ah-young is a young woman who works as a nurse in a dermatology unit. She barely ekes out a living because of the low salary from her main job squeezing patient's pimples, but she has a secret: Ah-young likes to dress up and go to real estate agents pretending she is looking for a place for herself so she can be shown around luxury apartments, or she goes shopping in luxury shops as if she really can afford the expensive products on offer there. Can Ah-young escape from the prison of vanity that she has built up for herself? With the story of this young woman, the film coldly illustrates mental diseases and the social ills in capitalism.

Director Kim Tae-yong's first film *Set Me Free* tells us a story about a high school boy who desperately wants to avoid being sent away from his group home: an institution for abandoned children. His double life in the movie makes the audience feel sometimes sad and sometimes despicable. The boy does not know where to go, and neither his family, school nor society show him any direction either. Last not but least, *Socialphobia*, which is the debut movie by director Hong Seok-jae, starts with the death of a woman who had caused a controversy on a social networking site. She was branded as a public enemy because of the way she reacted against men online. Some young men made her personal information public and then went to her house but when they broke into her house, they found her dead, hanging from the ceiling. Why did she die? Was her death a suicide or homicide? The mystery thriller *Socialphobia* casts light on a dark side of modern society.

Nam Dong-chul
BIFF Programmer

END OF WINTER
철원기행
SUN 8 NOV 16:30
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: KIM DAE-HWAN
CAST: MOON CHANG-GIL, LEE YOUNG-LAN, KIM MIN-HYUK, LEE SANG-HEE, HEO JE-WONE
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 99MIN

Cheorwon, South Korea, is the place of a thorny family drama. The location is particularly apt for a long weekend of domestic recriminations; it is where military manoeuvres provide background aural accompaniment – from jet planes sonic booming overhead to ordnance tests shattering the silence. Entertainment comes when verbal skirmishes interrupt the rare fragile respites. Passive aggressive loggerheads and denial are of the watch-through-your-fingers variety. The reunion centres around the retirement of the patriarch, Kim Sung-keun (Moon Chang-gil), who, over dinner, drops a narrative bombshell that sets the film on its course. No relief is given, as the Kims are trapped in a tiny apartment by heavy snowfall. Excruciatingly funny and awkward moments emanate from the three days and two nights we spend together.

SOCIALPHOBIA
소셜포비아
SAT 7 NOV 14:00
ODEON PANTON STREET



Q&A: BIFF programmer Nam Dong-chul

DIRECTOR: HONG SEOK-JAE
CAST: BYUN YOHAN, LEE JU-SEUNG, HA YOON-KYUNG, RYU JUN-YEOL
THRILLER, DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 15 | 100MIN

When a soldier (Oh Hee-joon) tragically commits suicide, news spreads like wildfire online in Korea, generating not only messages of condolence but also repugnant comments from a young woman, (Ha Yoon-kyung), with a seeming axe to grind. In spite of an outcry against her statements, the woman continues her vitriolic outbursts and before long she is identified and her address made public on social media. Deciding to take the woman to task in person, on film for all to see, several deeply disgruntled individuals attend her home but on entering the house they find her dead, hanging from the ceiling. Two of the men, police-tech students Ji-woong (Byun Yohan) and Yong-min (Lee Ju-seong) suspect foul play and begin an investigation into her death. However, even they are not prepared for the shockingly disturbing discoveries they are about to unearth. Citing the increasing issues of suicide and cyberbullying, *Socialphobia* is a surprising yet utterly topical critique of society.

SET ME FREE
거인
 SAT 7 NOV 16:30
 ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: KIM TAE-YONG
 CAST: CHOI WOO-SHIK, KIM SU-HYUN, KANG SIN-CHEOL, SHIN JAE-HA, PARK JOO-HEE,
 JANG YOO-SANG
 DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 12A | 108MIN

Yeongjae (Choi Woo-shik) is a boy of high school age who resides at 'Isaac's Home', a family-like institution for children whose parents are financially or otherwise unable to care for them. On the surface, Yeongjae is a model child, always obedient and determined to join the seminary to become a priest. However, actually this young man is far more self-serving and regularly steals shoes etc. from the home's storage unit to sell at school. When the thefts are uncovered, Yeongjae fears his days at the home are numbered and tries all the harder to ingratiate himself with his carers. However, the more desperate Yeongjae's actions become the more his plans and life unravel and with no-one left to blame, his fear, despair and frustration move ever closer to an explosion of fury. An in-depth study of one young boy's desperate battle for security, *Set Me Free* deftly speaks of fear and loneliness brought on by social adversity.

WE WILL BE OK
그들이 죽었다
 SUN 8 NOV 18:30
 PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: director Baek Jae-ho, BIFF programmer Nam Dong-chul

DIRECTOR: BAEK JAE-HO
 CAST: KIM SANG-SEOK, LEE HWA
 FANTASY DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 102MIN

Sang-seok (Kim Sang-seok) is an actor whose career has stalled before it has even begun. He has never been in a major film production, he is completely unknown and though he wishes he could take part in the Busan International Film Festival his hopes are no more than pipe dreams. In an effort to help his situation, Sang-seok's friends Jae-ho and Tae-hee suggest making a film with him as the star. However, when the movie is cancelled, utterly dejected Sang-seok heads to a karaoke bar to drown his sorrows. There he meets a beautiful woman, Hwa (Lee Hwa), and falling instantly for her all the pain of the failed film project is overtaken by thoughts of her. Baek Jae-ho's nuanced first directorial feature has already been invited to a number of Korean film festivals, including BIFF.

WILD FLOWERS
들꽃
SUN 8 NOV 14:00
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: PARK SUK-YOUNG
CAST: CHO SOO-HYANG, JEONG HA-DAM, KWON EUN-SOO, PAUL LEE, KANG BONG-SUNG
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 18 | 114MIN

Running away from an unseen situation, teenagers Soo-hyang (Cho Soo-hyang) and Eun-soo (Kwon Eun-soo) find another young girl, Ha-dam (Jeong Ha-dam), being beaten up by a man in a rubble strewn area of the city. Coming to her aid by attacking the man with fists, feet and indeed bricks, they rescue the frightened girl and all three make a frantic, hurried escape. However, before these 'wild flowers' (runaway girls) can even begin to catch their breath and begin to get to know each other, they are kidnapped by a surly, aggressive man known only as 'Uncle' (Oh Chang-kyeong) and locked in a room. Quickly realising that they are to be forced into prostitution, Soo-hyang takes the lead in trying to secure their freedom. But all too soon, personal needs, lies, betrayal and the pressures of homelessness threaten to stretch the new friendship of these young wild flowers to utter breaking point. A nuanced story with outstanding performances from the female leads makes *Wild Flowers* an unmissable cinematic experience.

THE LIAR
거짓말
SAT 7 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: BIFF programmer Nam Dong-chul

DIRECTOR: KIM DONG-MYUNG
CAST: KIM KKOBBY, CHUN SIN-HWAN
DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 95MIN

Ah-young (Kim Kkobbi, who largely became known to UK audiences for her memorable performance in Yang Ik-june's hard hitting drama *Breathless* (2008)) is a dermatology clinic assistant who outwardly appears to be a happy, young woman of means. However, the truth of her situation is far removed from the boastful stories she endlessly tells. She steals, borrows and increasingly lies to hide the fact that her family is broken and destitute and her sister a chronic alcoholic. As Ah-young's web of deceit becomes ever more intricate and convoluted, cracks in her stories begin to appear and as she loses respect from the very people she has been trying to impress, her lies, and life, start to fall apart.

DARCY PAQUET

The Dreams of South Korean Independent Cinema

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An early segment of actor/director Baek Jae-ho's debut feature *We Will Be Ok* (2014) is shot in Busan during the Busan International Film Festival. The film's protagonist Sang-seok (Kim Sang-seok) is an actor who dreams of success and fame, but seems far away from achieving either. He decides, together with two of his friends, to bypass the demands and prejudices of producers and the established filmmaking system and shoot a micro-budget film on their own initiative. They come to Busan not so much because it is instrumental to their project, but rather because they want to feel a bit closer to their dream of one day completing the film and premiering it in front of the enthusiastic audiences at BIFF.

We Will Be Ok (despite its reassuring title, which contrasts with the sentiment of its original Korean title "They Died") is not the story of an underdog genius triumphing over insurmountable odds to realize a cherished goal. It looks a bit more like everyday reality for the countless numbers of young Korean directors who struggle to get themselves established in an industry that is rife with competition and a surplus of talent. South Korea, a nation that over the past two decades has become known for its cinephilia and enthusiasm for local cinema, might seem from the outside like a supportive environment for young filmmakers. But most industry insiders tell a different story.

One challenge facing young filmmakers is the structure and character of the mainstream commercial film industry, which continues to put up gaudy numbers and to produce record-breaking box office hits. Although in one sense Korean cinema's contemporary renaissance continues unabated, with local films accounting for anywhere between 45% and 60% of the market in a typical year, the contrast in mood between the early renaissance and the later renaissance is striking.

Looking back to the years 1996-2000, the Korean film industry saw the debut of a staggering number of directors who would go on to find major domestic and international success. Debut features by Hong Sangsoo *The Day a Pig Fell Into the Well* (1996), Kim Ki-duk *Crocodile* (1996), Lee Chang-dong *Green Fish* (1997), Im Sangsoo *Girls Night Out* (1998), Bong Joon Ho *Barking Dogs Never Bite* (2000) and Ryoo Seung-wan *Die Bad* (2000) represent only the most famous names in a much broader wave of new filmmakers who surged into the industry all at once. (Park Chan-wook, whose third film *Joint Security Area* (2000) proved to be his breakthrough, is typically included within this group, although his first feature was released in 1992.) No other half-decade period in Korean film history has produced so many

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important directors, although the mid- to late 1950s, when the industry was recovering from the utter destruction of the Korean War, came close.

Key to the success of the late-1990s generation was an industry-wide desire for change. The young directors were supported by an emerging new generation of producers who hoped to create a groundbreaking new aesthetic for Korean films. The industry had not fared well under decades of military rule (with a number of dazzling exceptions), and so there was a broad consensus on the need to target younger audiences and attempt something different in terms of subject matter, narrative and style.

Today, on the heels of a decade and a half of sustained commercial success, there is less of a consensus on the part of investors about the need to push boundaries. The big, vertically-integrated companies who dominate the industry play a much more active role in the filmmaking process than they used to. These days, inspiration for new projects is more likely to center around models of past success, rather than novel ideas.

In an industry that still displays great respect for directors, established filmmakers like Bong Joon Ho can continue to break new creative ground in a relatively unrestrained way. Although in the industry as a whole, the figure of the producer has lost much power, there remain a few influential producers such as Shim Jae-myung and Lee Eun at Myung Films who can shield their directors from the influence of big investors. For the most part, however, Korean directors working in the mainstream industry are expected to toe the line in terms of the creative decisions (casting, screenplay construction) that are seen to affect box office returns.

So it's not that the mainstream industry doesn't seek out new directorial talent and produce the work of up-and-coming debut directors. Large numbers of directors continue to make their debut each year. It's that young directors who make their first or second film in the mainstream industry are unable to put much of a personal stamp on their work. It's hard to capture critical attention and start building a directorial career when the films you make feel pretty much the same as the films made by everyone else. It's not uncommon to interview young directors who carry daring, original stories in their head, but who know they face terrible odds of ever realizing such projects.

The other available path for young directors is to enter the independent film sector. Indeed, the number of independent films being shot in Korea has surged in the past 6-7 years, despite low levels of government support under recent administrations. This has been the result of both technological change (as elsewhere in the world, it is now easier than ever to shoot high

quality films with inexpensive, easily-accessible equipment), and also a slight opening in the distribution market. It's not an exaggeration to say that South Korea now possesses two distinct film industries, with very different systems.

As in other film industries around the world, defining "independent cinema" can sometimes be problematic. The Korean Film Council defines a low-budget feature as a work with a pre-marketing budget of under 1 billion won (about GBP 565,000). In practice, most low-budget features come in below GBP 300,000 (for self-financed features, often well below), and very few mainstream commercial figures are budgeted at less than GBP 1.5 million. So in looking at Korea's annual film output, two distinct groups emerge.

Meanwhile, there is an increasing range of directors working within the independent sector. Film students or recent graduates make up one end of the spectrum, but an increasing number of established filmmakers are also building up impressive bodies of work outside of the mainstream industry. Crossover goes in both directions: some independent directors go on to make mainstream films, while an increasing number of directors from the mainstream industry decide to pursue opportunities in independent cinema. There has also been a burst of creativity among Korean documentaries, which draw increasingly large numbers of viewers in the theater.

Korean independent cinema first emerged as a coherent movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as an extension of the broader political movements of that age. For many people, the activist character of these early independent films became their defining feature. But as the years passed, independent cinema diversified in subject matter and style, so that there are now fewer commonalities tying together the movement as a whole.

Within this latest surge of independent features, important new voices are emerging. One of the most widely-praised debuts of recent years was Park Jung-bum's *The Journals of Musan* (2010), about the struggles of a North Korean defector to adjust to life in Seoul. The elegantly-composed but harrowing film won large numbers of festival awards around the world, and the strong reception of Park's second feature *Alive* (2014) confirmed his status as one of the leaders of an emerging movement.

As other directors release their second and third features, they are similarly being recognized for their accomplishments and future potential. Shin Su-won debuted in 2009 with *Passerby #3*, a film based loosely on her own experience as a housewife dealing with family issues while simultaneously struggling to get financing for her feature film debut. After her short film *Circle Line* (2012) won a Canal+ Prize at Cannes, she has released the features

Pluto (2012), about the pressures faced by students at a Seoul high school, and the grueling hospital-set drama *Madonna* (2015), which screened in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes earlier this year.

A more experimental voice is emerging in director Lee Kwang-kuk, whose playful but complex features *Romance Joe* (2011) and *A Matter of Interpretation* (2014) both premiered in Busan and went on to wider festival exposure around the world. The twisted strands of Lee's plots, which repeat and turn back on each other, offer a challenge to viewers to let go of their preconceptions and watch cinema in a new way. The experimentation of director Jang Kun-jae is of a more understated style, but his works too – from his coming-of-age debut film *Eighteen* (2009), to the marital drama *Sleepless Night* (2012) and his latest work *A Midsummer's Fantasia* (2014) – require viewers to set aside their expectations of what film narrative typically is.

The reception of Jang's *A Midsummer's Fantasia* in Korea this summer represents a glimpse of what independent filmmakers hope for when they release their films in the local market. Shot in Japan, the striking backdrop, unusual narrative structure, and vivid sense of lived experience formed a striking contrast to the mainstream summer release slate. Viewers were impressed, and soon word of mouth spread through Twitter and other social media platforms, helping to extend its release. Its final box office tally of 35,000 admissions may pale beside the 10 million admission mega-hits of the commercial sector, but it nonetheless represents an achievement worth celebrating, and a meaningful financial return to the director.

Still, most independent films face major distribution hurdles. Although approximately 60 narrative films and 30 documentaries are released each year, few of these receive enough of a marketing push for general audiences to become aware of their existence. CGV Arthouse, a division of the exhibition/distribution giant CJ, has successfully pushed a number of independent films out onto wider release, thanks to its nationwide chain of screens devoted to arthouse and independent film. This has led to some encouraging success stories, such as *Jiseul* (2013), which dramatizes a real-life government massacre of civilians in Jeju Island in 1948 (145,000 admissions); the hard-hitting drama *Han Gong-ju* (2014), about a high school girl trying to recover from an unspeakable trauma (225,000 admissions); and most notably, the documentary *My Love Don't Cross That River* (2014) about an elderly couple facing death, which amassed an astounding 4.8 million admissions. Nonetheless, this has also opened up debate about power imbalances within the independent sector itself.

It goes without saying that independent films made in Korea today are influenced by the particular characteristics of the film industry. In one sense, going low-budget offers independent filmmakers the opportunity to completely sidestep commercial pressures. Without the expectation of commercial success, directors in theory can prioritize originality and artistic experimentation above all else. But simultaneously, independent directors remain highly conscious of the Korean audience. Successful independent directors receive invitations to film festivals around the world, and come into contact with a diverse global audience. But in watching most Korean independent films, it is the desire to reach and communicate with the domestic audience that one feels most strongly.

In this sense, the dream of premiering one's debut in Busan speaks to more than just an abstract desire for success or fame. It represents a wish to become part of a dynamic exchange that exists between Korean filmmakers and their audience. The audience for independent cinema is not as large as that of mainstream cinema, but it possesses a dynamism that can be felt in Busan, Jeonju, the Seoul Independent Film Festival or any number of other local film events. It can also be felt online, in the enthusiastic and sometimes heated exchanges which arise over certain issues or films, and also in print media like the film weekly *Cine21*. For a filmmaker who, at great personal sacrifice, spends months and years in an unsupportive environment in order to create a film that expresses some aspect of themselves and their thoughts, an audience's response is of tremendous importance.

To understand contemporary Korean independent film therefore, you need to understand its audience. The tastes of this audience are different to those of most international film festival programmers, though in some respects they do overlap. One does feel that Korean directors choose subject matter and themes that resonate with and hold meaning for the local audience.

In a society often characterized as highly stressed and competitive, a sense of anxiety pervades much of contemporary Korean independent film. The anxiety is in part economic, but it runs deeper than simply concern over money. In many cases, social pressures leave some individuals isolated, and others feeling trapped within rigid social hierarchies. Families, broken families, and absent families are central to many recent works such as *Set Me Free* (2014), based loosely on the personal experience of debut director Kim Tae-yong; *End of Winter* (2014), about a sudden rift that emerges during a family reunion; and *Wild Flowers* (2014), about teenage runaway girls; to name just a few examples.

The challenges faced by youth is another recurrent theme. Korean middle and high schools are some of the world's most intense and competitive, placing outrageous levels of pressure on students whose future careers are often decided by just a question or two on the annual university entrance exam. Many students end up effectively sacrificing their youth in return for university admission. This kind of pressure is depicted directly in films like Shin Su-won's *Pluto*, but the stress young people feel often spills over into peer harassment and abuse. *Socialphobia* (2014) is an example of a film that shows how rivalries and jealousies among students are inflated by the social environment and social media technologies.

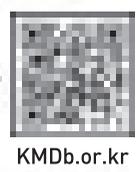
In tackling such sensitive but pervasive social issues, Korean independent filmmakers are sending a message back to the viewers who search them out. It's a recognition and acknowledgement of the stresses and challenges faced by ordinary people in their daily lives. The films do not presume to hold answers about how to solve such problems, and one of the strengths of Korean independent cinema is that they tend to avoid an overly didactic or prescriptive tone. But in saying, "I understand what you are going through," they offer up some measure of solace, and contribute to an ongoing conversation about the current state and future course of Korean society.

Hi! movie



스마트폰, 태블릿PC로
 <영화천국>을 즐기세요!

지금 모바일 전문 애플리케이션 탐진(tapzin)을
 다운로드 받아서 <영화천국>을 만나보세요.



AUDIENCE'S CHOICE

The 2015 Programme sees the introduction of an Audience's Choice strand, where the public were asked to vote for their favourite Opening/Closing films from the festival over the last 9 years. The top three films chosen by visitors to our Facebook page, which will be screened at this year's festival are: the 2008 Opening film *The Good, the Bad, the Weird* from Kim Jee-woon, the 2010 Opening film *The Man from Nowhere* from Director Lee Jeong-beom and the 2012 Opening film *The Thieves* from Choi Dong-hoon.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE WEIRD
좋은 놈, 나쁜 놈, 이상한 놈
FRI 13 NOV 22:45
PICTUREHOUSE HACKNEY



DIRECTOR: KIM JEE-WOON
CAST: SONG KANG-HO, LEE BYUNG-HUN, JUNG WOO-SUNG
ACTION, COMEDY, WESTERN | 2008 | CERT. 15 | 139MIN

In the course of his 'normal' thieving activities in ancient Manchuria, The Weird / Yoon Tae-goo (Song Kang-ho) comes into possession of a mysterious map while robbing a train. The map in question has been sold by an underworld crime boss who has employed a ruthless, vain and insecure bandit, The Bad / Chang-yi (Lee Byung-hun), to steal it back, thereby securing both the cash and said map. Tae-goo quickly becomes convinced that the map gives the details of a buried treasure site and excitedly heads off to find the "gold". However, before he can get far he stumbles across The Good / Park Do-won (Jung Woo-sung), a sharpshooter who is in pursuit of Chang-yi to catch him and get the bounty on his head. Unsure of each other's motivations, the two men grudgingly agree to help each other by catching Chang-yi and finding the treasure before either he or the imperialist Japanese can get to it. And so begins a thrilling, action packed roller coaster ride across Manchuria, complete with motorcycles, where hunter becomes hunted at the drop of a map.

THE MAN FROM NOWHERE

아저씨

SAT 7 NOV 22:45

PICTUREHOUSE RITZY



DIRECTOR: LEE JEONG-BEOM
CAST: WON BIN, KIM SAE-RON
ACTION, CRIME, DRAMA | 2010 | CERT. 18 | 119MIN

Tae-shik (Won Bin) is a mysterious, monosyllabic individual who has been a virtual recluse since the death of his wife. Running a dilapidated pawnshop, Tae-shik's only real friend is So-mi (Kim Sae-ron), a little girl whose mother is an exotic dancer and heroin addict. When the mother pawns a camera bag in his shop, Tae-shik is totally unaware that it contains heroin that she stole during a drug deal at the nightclub where she works. However, the truth of the situation quickly becomes clear as mobsters come searching for their missing drugs, kidnapping So-mi and her mother in the process. Enraged, and without hesitation, he sets out to make the gangsters pay and save So-mi, the only true friend he has. As poignant as it is thrilling, *The Man from Nowhere* comes from director Lee Jeong-beom, known for both *Cruel Winter Blues* (2006) and his more recent film *No Tears for the Dead* (2014).

THE THIEVES

도둑들

FRI 6 NOV 20:45

ODEON PANTON STREET



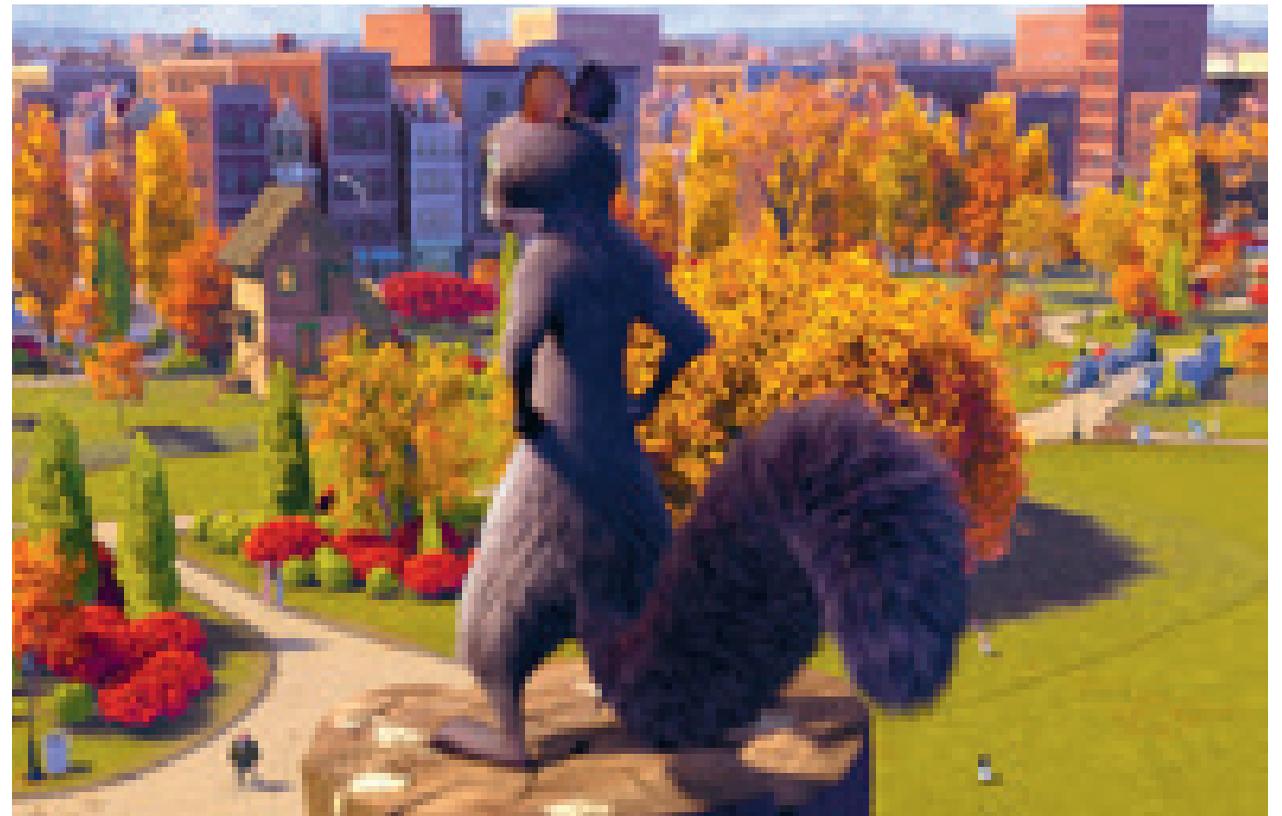
DIRECTOR: CHOI DONG-HOON
CAST: KIM YUN-SEOK, KIM HYE-SOO, LEE JUNG-JAE, GIANNA JUN
ACTION, CRIME, DRAMA | 2012 | CERT. 15 | 135MIN

Popie (Lee Jung-jae) and his infamous band of thieves – sexy acrobat Yenicall (Gianna Jun), beautiful safe cracker Pepsee (Kim Hye-soo), muscle man Zampano (Kim Soo-hyun) and long-time thief Chewingum (Kim Hae-sook) – are offered the chance by master criminal Macao Park (Kim Yoon-seok) to travel to Hong Kong to steal the Tear of the Sun diamond from a notorious crime boss. As preparations get underway and the day of the heist approaches, personal histories and animosities begin to surface, too, leaving the success of the entire project hanging in the balance. With an all-star cast and a pulse-pounding plot, *The Thieves* was the second highest grossing film of all time in Korea in 2013.

FOR THE FAMILY

Our family strand includes the hit animations *The Nut Job* and *Dino Time* and the humorous family film *How to Steal a Dog*. *Dino Time* is a time-travelling dinosaur adventure for all the family. *The Nut Job* follows Surly, a mischievous city park squirrel and his rat friend Buddy, who plan an outrageous nut-store heist and unwittingly get embroiled in a human bank robbery. In the comedy *How to Steal a Dog* we meet a schoolgirl and a nephew who are hatching competing plans to raise much needed funds by attempting to borrow a dog, in anticipation of the reward that will be offered for its return.

THE NUT JOB
넛잡: 땅콩 도둑들
SAT 7 NOV 15:30
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: PETER LEPENIOTIS
CAST: WILL ARNETT, KATHERINE HEIGL, LIAM NEESON, BRENDAN FRASER
ANIMATION | 2014 | CERT. PG | 86MIN

From ToonBox Entertainment comes *The Nut Job*, a fun, super-comedy adventure of nutty proportions! The movie kicks off in idyllic “Liberty Park,” an oasis nestled within the sprawling 50’s metropolis of fictional Oakton City. The park is host to varieties of winged and footed creatures - mice, ground hogs, rats... and of course, squirrels. Lots of squirrels. *The Nut Job* follows the travails of Surly, a mischievous city park squirrel and his rat friend Buddy, who plan an outrageous nut-store heist and unwittingly get embroiled in a human bank robbery! Don’t let this simple concept fool you, this squirrel movie really packs a punch... this is big! Full of heroes and villains, daring rescues, comic mix-ups and classic slapstick, *The Nut Job* boasts an exciting cast of characters and a thrill-ride ending sure to satisfy audiences.

DINO TIME
다이노 타임
 SAT 7 NOV 13:00
 ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: CHOI YOON-SUK, JOHN KAFKA
 CAST: MELANIE GRIFFITH, JANE LYNCH, WILLIAM BALDWIN, STEPHEN BALDWIN, ROB SCHNEIDER
 ANIMATION | 2012 | CERT. PG | 85MIN

Ernie needs an escape. His mum, Sue, is a strict disciplinarian, his little sister, Julia, rattles on him every chance she gets, and he just can't seem to stay out of trouble. Ernie visits his neighbour Max, who with the help of his genius father, has invented a sleek, egg-shaped contraption that he believes can travel through time. Suddenly, Julia bursts in to bust the two boys again, and in the ensuing chaos, the time machine whirs to life and closes its doors on the three arguing kids. After a violent jolt, the hydraulic doors hiss open to reveal a gorgeous green valley, covered with lush jungle untouched by mankind. A shadow passes overhead, and the kids look up to see the bewildered face of a living, breathing Tyrannosaurus Rex. Max and Julia are scared stiff, but as long as they're not being eaten Ernie welcomes the vacation from his mother's authority. The time machine has lost a vital component in the crash, and the three kids can't get home without it. Unfortunately, when a group of egg-poaching dinosaurs sneak away with the time machine, the trouble really begins.

HOW TO STEAL A DOG
개를 훔치는 완벽한 방법
 SAT 14 NOV 15:00
 PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



DIRECTOR: KIM SUNG-HO
 CAST: LEE RE, KIM HYE-JA, CHOI MIN-SOO, KANG HAE-JUNG
 DRAMA, FAMILY | 2014 | CERT. PG | 109MIN

Since her family went bankrupt and her father ran off, schoolgirl Ji-so (Lee Re) has been living with her mother (Kang Hae-jung) and her brother (Hong Eun-taek) in a pizza van. Deeply embarrassed by her situation, Ji-so desperately wants to live a normal life in a house but her mother is barely making ends meet in her job as a waitress. When Ji-so finds a poster offering a \$500 reward for the return of a lost dog, she believes the money would be enough to buy exactly the type of house she yearns for. So, she and her school friend Chae-rang (Lee Ji-won) hatch a plan to steal the dog owned by her mother's rich employer (Kim Hye-ja) and claim a similar reward for its return. However, the old woman's nephew, Soo-young (Lee Chun-hee), is also trying to steal the dog to get his hands on his aunt's inheritance. Korean film fans will likely recognise director Kim Sung-ho from his classic horror *Into the Mirror* (2003) and with *How to Steal a Dog* he shows that he is also an expert in humour filled family fun.

20 YEARS OF CJ ENTERTAIN- MENT

In celebration of the 20th Anniversary of Korea's biggest film distribution company CJ Entertainment, this strand presents a standout selection of the company's portfolio from big blockbusters to independent titles. Film's screening in this strand include the newly black and white mastered version of the dramatic *Mother* directed by Bong Joon Ho. Also screening in this strand are Hwang Dong-hyeuk's fun and touching feature *Miss Granny* and Choo Chang-min's *Masquerade*, a tale of the paranoid 15th ruler of Korea's Joseon Dynasty, King Gwanghae.

ROARING CURRENTS

명량

SUN 8 NOV 15:30

ODEON KINGSTON



DIRECTOR: KIM HAN-MIN
CAST: CHOI MIN-SIK, RYU SEUNG-RYONG, CHO JIN-WOONG
HISTORICAL DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. 15 | 128MIN

Roaring Currents became the biggest ever Korean box office hit in 2014. Based on the true-life story of The Battle of Myeongnyang, one of Korea's greatest military victories led by navy commander and strategist Admiral Yi Sun-shin, the film stars Choi Min-sik of *Oldboy* fame. Having been imprisoned and tortured for (perceived) failures while in command, Yi Sun-shin (Choi Min-sik) is recalled to his post in the face of an imminent Japanese invasion. Following the near-devastation of the Korean navy in an earlier battle, Yi must prepare to hold off a Japanese fleet of more than 300 with only a handful of ships. He decides to confront the Japanese at the strait of Myeongnyang – an area known for its treacherous currents – hoping to fool his opponents into thinking he has troops, ships and firepower large enough to warrant a fight to the death. Not even knowing if his opponents will fall into his trap, Yi loads his ships with canons and sails out to a brutal confrontation.

MEMORIES OF MURDER
살인의 추억
SAT 7 NOV 22:45
PICTUREHOUSE HACKNEY



DIRECTOR: BONG JOON HO
CAST: SONG KANG-HO, KIM SANG-KYUNG, KIM RWE-HA, PARK HAE-IL
CRIME | 2003 | CERT. 15 | 127MIN

Between 1986 and 1991 a serial killer murdered ten women, between the ages of 13 and 71, in a small town in south of Seoul, South Korea. This being the first serial killer case the country had seen it caused a media frenzy. *Memories of Murder* uses this true-life serial killer story as the basis for its story with Detective Park Doo-Man (Song Kang-ho) and his violent partner Cho young-koo (Kim Rwe-ha) assigned to the case. Detective Park clearly isn't the sharpest of cops, but being thoroughly convinced that he is surrounded by idiots (which is actually pretty true) he is sure his keen sense for "spotting villains" will allow him to find the killer. Blundering their way through the case, Park and Cho come to interview Hyun-ku (Park Hae-il), a genuinely unsettling, creepy character whose cold, emotionless gaze adds fuel to the detectives' belief that they may have finally found their man. Felt by many to be the best Korean film ever made, Bong Joon Ho's *Memories of Murder* defines classic Korean cinema.

MOTHER
마더
FRI 6 NOV 22:45
PICTUREHOUSE HACKNEY



DIRECTOR: BONG JOON HO
CAST: KIM HYE-JA, WON BIN
CRIME | 2009 | CERT. 18 | 129MIN

A middle-aged (unnamed) mother (Kim Hye-ja) lives with her mentally slow son, Do-joon (Won Bin), in a rundown part of town where she sells homeopathic herbs and roots. Though all around think Do-joon is good looking, his mental limitations mean that he has never had a girlfriend and he is even under the impression that sleeping with someone means exactly that. When a young girl is killed, police learn that Do-joon had been following her on the night of her death and, with the discovery of evidence near her body linking him to the crime scene; he is arrested and charged with murder. Knowing that Do-joon "couldn't hurt a water bug", his mother desperately tries to convince the authorities to re-investigate the case but when they refuse she realises that if her son's innocence is to be proved she will have to find the real murderer herself. Helmed by one of the best and well-known Korean directors, Bong Joon Ho, *Mother* subtly states that catching a monster often requires becoming a monster.

MASQUERADE
광해
SUN 8 NOV 13:00
ODEON PANTON STREET



DIRECTOR: CHOO CHANG-MIN
CAST: LEE BYUNG-HUN, RYOO SEUNG-RYONG, HAN HYO-JOO
HISTORICAL DRAMA | 2012 | CERT. 15 | 131MIN

King Gwanghae (Lee Byung-hun) is a strong and forthright ruler in Joseon Dynasty Korea. Fearing an assassination attempt on his life, he instructs his secretary of defence Heo Gyun (Ryoo Seung-ryong) to find someone who looks enough like him to take his place at public engagements. The doppel-ganger found is a lowly acrobat, Ha-seon (also played by Lee Byung-hun), who knows nothing of etiquette, royal life or indeed how to impersonate a monarch but when Gwanghae is indeed poisoned, Ha-seon is pushed into taking his place as a figurehead 24/7 while the king recovers, nonetheless. However, as he begins to play a part in official proceedings, Ha-seon's caring nature as a ruler begins to shine bringing questions from the royal court and causing the queen to question which king she truly loves. With Lee Byung-hun being one of the most popular male Korean actors, it is easy to see why *Masquerade* became one of the highest grossing Korean movies of all time.

MISS GRANNY
수상한 그녀
TUE 3 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



Q&A: director Hwang Dong-hyeuk

DIRECTOR: HWANG DONG-HYEUK
CAST: SHIM EUN-KYUNG, NA MOON-HEE
COMEDY, FAMILY | 2014 | CERT. 15 | 124MIN

A surprise hit at the Korean box office, *Miss Granny* is the latest film by Hwang Dong-hyeok who helmed the superlative *Silenced* in 2013. *Miss Granny* tells the story of 74-year-old Mal-soon (Na Moon-hee), a rather bitter elderly lady who endlessly shares the difficulties she has faced in life with anyone within earshot. On overhearing a conversation in which her family discusses putting her in an old people's home, she fears she has become nothing but a burden to those around her. So, when she passes a photo studio called 'Forever Young' she decides the time has come to have her memorial picture taken, in what she's convinced are her final days. Sitting for the portrait to be taken, Mal-soon is told by the photographer that he'll make her look 50 years younger - a compliment she happily accepts - but to her shock, horror and subsequent excitement on leaving the studio she finds that she has indeed become her 24-year-old younger self (played by Shim Eun-kyung). However, as Mal-soon is soon to rediscover, being young isn't all that easy.

CLASSICS REVISITED

Classics Revisited, programmed by Dr Mark Morris shines the spotlight on one of Korea's most notable auteurs, Chung Chang-wa. Having directed over 58 films including the renowned *Five Fingers of Death*, Chung between 1969-1977 was the first Korean director to work overseas. Films screening here include the hit crime-drama *A Bonanza* about a man's search for a gold mine and *Sunset on the Sarbin River* about a Korean youth who becomes a Japanese army officer.

A BONANZA
노다지
FRI 13 NOV 18:00
REGENT STREET CINEMA



Q&A: director Chung Chang-wa, Dr. Mark Morris

DIRECTOR: CHUNG CHANG-WHA
CAST: KIM SEUNG-HO, HWANG HAE, UM AING-RAN
NOIR, MELODRAMA | 1961 | CERT. 12A | 100MIN

A young sailor arrives in Busan Harbour; an outrageous-looking, woolly bear of a man appears in downtown Busan with a shotgun over one shoulder, a heavy knapsack thrown over the other; a tough-looking young woman joins her friend in robbing a naïve fat man in a suit. The strands of character and story will slowly converge, well after the audience, tuned to the coincidences and mistaken identities of melodrama, has recognised that these three have a shared history and are fated to meet and reconcile.

SUNSET ON THE SARBIN RIVER
사르빈강에 노을이 진다
 SAT 14 NOV 13:00
 REGENT STREET CINEMA



DIRECTOR: CHUNG CHANG-WHA
 CAST: SHIN YOUNG-KYUN, KIM HYE-JUNG, NAM GOONG WON, YOON IL-BONG
 ACTION, DRAMA | 1965 | CERT. TBC | 120MIN

A Korean college student, his name japanised as Masumoto, feels compelled to join the Imperial Army and do his bit for the war. To his fellow Korean recruits, he seems a martinet, much too eager to try to prove himself as the equal of the Japanese. He gets promoted and rejoins the unit as officer in charge. They are despatched to Burma where they are visited by a group of young Korean women of a 'teishintai': comfort women. On the way to the front, their truck is attacked, on the road again, they encounter a beautiful Burmese woman with her child. They give her a lift, and she drops a note about their movements to waiting guerrillas of the new independence army. She and Masumoto fall in love, while her guerrilla husband swears revenge for the death of their son at the hands of Japanese soldiers led by our hero. Only one of the triangle will be standing at the film's end.

A SWORDSMAN IN THE TWILIGHT
황혼의 검객
 SAT 14 NOV 15:30
 REGENT STREET CINEMA



Q&A: director Chung Chang-wha, Dr. Mark Morris

DIRECTOR: CHUNG CHANG-WHA
 CAST: NAM GOONG WON, YOON JUNG-HEE, HEO JANG-KANG, PARK AM
 HISTORICAL DRAMA | 1967 | CERT. PG | 105MIN

A mysterious swordsman wanders into town. He saves a girl from abduction by brutal policemen. One of them recognises him and runs to the local government compound to give warning: Kim Dae-won has returned, no doubt seeking vengeance. Kim attacks the compound, killing or capturing all the police, and takes the county governor hostage. As the night wears on, he gradually unfolds his story to the bound hostages. He and his family became collateral damage in the political and social strife caused by Jang Hui-bin and her allies. He now awaits the arrival of the ruthless Jang family ally, O Ki-ryeong, the man who plotted the destruction of his loving wife and little girl. They meet in a deadly showdown. Kim Dae-won wanders back out of town.

MARK MORRIS

Chung Chang-wha: A Man for All Genres

Our short retrospective of films by Chung Chang-wha presents three films made by him during the 1960s, a golden decade for South Korean cinema. *A Bonanza* made in 1961, *Sunset on the Sarbin River* from 1965, and the 1967 *A Swordsman in the Twilight*.

Director Chung is rightly praised for his kinetic imagination and the skill in crafting action films, both those made in South Korea, where his career began in the late 1940s, and those he made in Hong Kong for Shaw Brothers and Golden Harvest Studios between 1969 and 1977. After a long period of working as a director and making some 58 films, he returned to South Korea and produced another 30. Most accounts of his career emphasise the international success of his Shaw Brothers' martial arts action film *King Boxer* (1972), often known by the more graphic title chosen by the American distributor Warner Brothers, *Five Fingers of Death*.

It is no surprise that our three films feature action scenes, most of all *A Swordsman in the Twilight*. 'Action film', however, does not really tell us much about any film: a film has to be grounded in a time and place (historical or fantastic), have a recognisable narrative shape, present characters who can be identified with, loved or loathed, etc. If it is a commercial film made for a general audience, like all those made by director Chung, it will often wrap its constituent elements up in a complex package of form and content we refer to as a film genre.

In order to demonstrate the breadth of his film-making experience and also the flexibility required of a director during this era, I felt that neither a descriptive essay nor the jargon of academic analysis would really do the job. Instead, I offer below an annotated filmography of all the films – both those now lost and those which survive – between Chung's first film in 1953 to the latest in date of our three films from 1967.

You can skip to the brief sections about the three key films (in bold) or ramble around the whole landscape. Brief outlines of plot are given (in italics), followed by notes on genre, casting and other matters of note to make your journey, if not always clearly sign-posted, at least informative.

Note that * indicates films lost/unavailable at Korean Film Archive (KOFA).

English titles generally follow the quirky translations on the KOFA Database:

http://www.kmdb.or.kr/vod/mm_basic.asp?person_id=00001206&keyword=정창화#url

1953

* *The Final Temptation* 최후의 유혹

A female bar owner is involved with a band of gangsters, eventually helping them entrap the man who loves her; she repents, helps the police catch the villains, and she and he are free to be together.

The film was shot and released in Busan, not a success. Only some 6 films were made in the war-torn nation during 1953. An earlier film begun by him before the outbreak of war was lost in the chaos.

1954

* *A Street of Temptation* 유혹의 거리

A band of smugglers, their crimes; eventually they are bested by vigilant police and loyal citizens.

Smuggling, and the crime associated with the floating refugee population of a port city such as Busan, were popular topics of post-war film.

1955

* *The Start of Jae-il* 제일의 출발

Sponsored by the Bank of Japan, the film encouraged financial probity and savings. (Odd sounding topic, but the first Korean feature of 1923, *Pledge Beneath the Moon*, had been sponsored by the Japanese Government General for similar goals.)

1956

* *Jang-hwa and Hong-ryeon Story* 장화홍련전

Two sisters are tormented by an evil step-mother. After they are murdered, they return as ghosts to seek vengeful justice.

A historical ghost legend beloved of many step-daughters. First made into a film in 1924. The latest of more than a half-dozen versions was Kim Jee-woon's successfully modernized adaptation *A Tale of Two Sisters* (2003).

1957

The Palace of Ambition 풍은의 궁전

A crown prince of the ancient Mahan kingdom needs to choose a bride. He picks his favourite, but the father of the losing candidate swears to put his own daughter in power, or bring the king himself down. The new crown princess flees for her life, joins up with a young exile whose family was destroyed by the villain, and together they defeat all the villains and save the crown prince.

The oldest surviving film of Chung's. Archaic-looking costumes, including crowns with wavy antlers, black-bearded bad guys fighting good guys in Joseon-era settings. The focal character is the lively princess. Camera-work basic but innovative (tracking shot with pull focus, etc.), as is the final showdown which cross-cuts between three different duels. Beginnings of a film style suited to action.

1958

* *Longing for Home* 망향

A territorial dispute involving a gang trying to smuggle gold bullion to communist China and another trying to steal it. Into that story comes the love affairs of a young Korean gangster.

Smuggling, action, and melodrama thrown in as well. A joint production, Hong Kong-South Korea, with actors from both. Exported to Taiwan. First signs of a Hong Kong and wider international career. There would be more than 100 Hong-South Korean co-productions from the late 1950s till the 1980s.

1958

* *The Island of Disappointed Love* 비련의 섬

On vacation to a distant island, man meets and falls for local girl. They marry despite the opposition of his mother, who goes on to torment the girl. Finally she is forced to recognise the worth of her daughter-in-law. Happy ending.

1959

* *The Tumult of Dr Boaster* 후라이보이 박사 소동

Dr Heo, a rocket designer, goes missing. A reward is offered; attracts an imposter who pretends to be Dr Heo.

A first venture into modern-themed comedy.

1959

* *Before Love is Gone* 사랑이 가기 전에

A student falls for a nightclub entertainer. She gives him up for the sake of his future. He finds a nice girlfriend but still longs for the other woman. Nice girl bravely encourages him to return to his first love.

First full melodrama. Already working with actors who would be stars through 1960s and beyond: male character-actor mainstay Hwang Hae,

Mun Jeong-suk – the female lead in the best of Lee Man-hee’s films – and the great diva-to-be, Kim Ji-mi.

1960

**A Sunny Field* 햇빛 쏟아지는 벌판

A kind office worker in a textile firm rescues a young woman from villains: knows where a hoard of gold had been hidden during wartime chaos. Eventually police brought in, arrest the villains. It turns out the dishonest current head of the company had the gold chest all along. Irony: it contains no more than a riddle about the vanity of possessiveness.

Like many dramas of late-1950s and early sixties, this film was adapted from a successful radio serial. 100,000 Seoul box office makes it an early hit. Im Kwon-taek begins his career here as assistant director.

1960

**Sorrow Like a River* 슬픔은 강물처럼

The life and loves of a female university student. Young woman torn between nice boyfriend, off doing military service, and exotic poet. She sticks with poet even though he is often ill. A born carer, she nurses him; he dies.

Adapted from hit ‘love diary’ of real student Choi Hui-suk, then billed as the Korean Françoise Sagan. Full melodrama.

1961

**Horizon* 지평선

Mix of patriotic action, melodrama; struggles of Korean army of independence against Japanese in wartime Manchuria.

A hit, with 100,000 plus tickets sold in Seoul alone. Set the stage for the genre Manchuria western, the Korean variant of the spaghetti western. Im Kwon-taek – here again working as A.D. – would follow his mentor in his own first film on similar themes, *Farewell, Duman River!* (1962).

1961

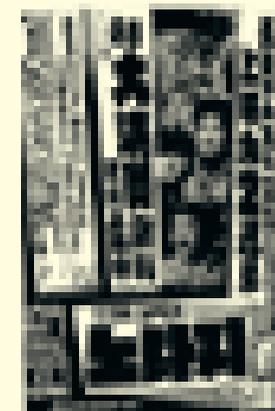
Jang Hui-Bin 장희빈

During the reign of Joseon-era King Sukjong, lowly serving girl Jang Ok-jung claws her way to position of queen and flirts, cajoles and bosses around the weak king; bears him a son, then convinces him to oust rightful queen and put her on the throne. She is found out and demoted, but continues her scheming using slander, magic, whatever it takes to get rid of the good, all-suf-

fering queen. The king belatedly orders her family punished; and she is forced to drink poison in operatic finale.

Adapted directly from a successful radio version, itself making use of the trove of stories in *The True Records of the Joseon Dynasty* – Confucian bureaucracy’s greatest gift to Korean writers and filmmakers.

Major stars: Kim Jin-kyu as fallible king, Kim Ji-mi in bravura performance as young Jang Hui-Bin. A major hit. Many versions would follow, film and TV drama, from a visually stunning film by Im Kwon-taek in 1968 (*Femme Fatale, Jang Hee-bin*) to TV serials such as *Dong-Yi* (2010) and *Jang Ok-jung, Living By Love* (2013).



1961

A Bonanza 노다지

A young sailor arrives in Busan Harbour; an outrageous-looking, woolly bear of a man appears in downtown Busan with a shotgun over one shoulder, a heavy knapsack thrown over the other; a tough-looking young woman joins her friend in robbing a naïve fat man in a suit. The strands of character and story will slowly converge, well after the audience, tuned to the coincidences and mistaken identities of melodrama, has recognised that these three have a shared history and are fated to meet and reconcile.

Family melodrama with a spice of noir – the woman is part of a criminal gang – plus a dash of action at the final shoot-out in the hills. The greatest of cinematic *aboji*, Kim Seung-ho, adds the offbeat character of Jang Wun-chil, gold prospector and terrible father, to his roles. During the early 1960s, Kim’s portrayal of fallible patriarchs beset by modern society and

challenged by his own children provided the dramatic energy to a number of now classic family dramas. Amid the mix of genres, however, you can detect a less artistic truth about the grinding poverty many Korean people would be experiencing well into the decade.

The final scene of reconciliation, where the older man hands over a paternal shotgun to the young man who will marry his daughter, should give Freudian interpreters great fun.

1962

The Seven Princesses 칠공주

When a seventh daughter is born to a king who already has six of them but no son, he orders the child cast away. A kind official substitutes his own newborn, and raises the girl. She grows up loyal to her foster father and eventually comes to the aid of the kingdom.

Exported to Taiwan, Japan and USA. Im Kwon-taek would make an historical film with a similar switch of children, *The Night of the Fifteenth* (1969).

1962

**Tell Me, Earth!* 대지여 말해다오

A young married couple suffer hardships working in a mining town in Manchuria. Near the end of WWII, he is drafted and undergoes brutal experiences in the Imperial Japanese Army.

Timely adaptation of postwar Japanese novel *The Human Condition*, which had just been made into an epic set of films by Kobayashi Masaki between 1959 and 1961.

1962

**Legend of Jang-hwa and Hong-ryeon* 대장화홍련전

Another version of his 1956 ghost tale.

1963

**Rulers of the Land* 대지의 지배자

Manchuria at war's end. Chaos everywhere. When Chinese communist troops abuse Japanese POWs, kindly Chinese join with patriotic Koreans to rescue these pathetic shadows of their former imperial masters.

Anti-communism trumps anti-Japanese sentiment. Exported to Taiwan, a reliable market for anti-communist films. Advertised as 'the first colour Cinemascope action thriller'.

1963

**The Great Plain* 대평원

*Korean students drafted into Imperial army suffer many hardships. An early step towards *Sunset on the River Sarbin* (1965).*

1963

**The Ridge of Youth* 청춘산맥

Two men vie for one woman. One is killed but no clues remain. Clever reporter learns the truth, man arrested. Crime plus melodrama.

1963

**The Couple Struggle* 부부전쟁

Son of rich man lives with gisaeng entertainer. Father blocks marriage until she concocts a cure for his dangerously high blood pressure. Happy ending. Melodrama.

1964

The Search Unit 수색대

A recon patrol looks for an enemy base during the Korean War. They find first a baby lying beside its dead mother. They adopt the baby and find a goat to provide milk. Humorous, until final showdown with enemy tank. Only survivor of the patrol walks out from smoking ruins with baby cradled in his arms.

A well-structured, short film (77 minutes) in war subgenre of men-on-a-mission. The final scene, of gritty actor Jang Dong-hui with baby, is an iconic one among Korean War films. Exported to Hong Kong, Taiwan and USA.

1965

**Night Fog* 밤안개

A middle-aged banker has two daughters but no sons. He takes a barmaid as concubine and she gives him a son. But her ex-lover appears threatening blackmail. The boy turns out to be the biological son of the lover. Banker eventually forgives all. Melodrama.

1965

Missing You to Death 죽도록 보고 싶어

A couple flee North Korea during the war but become separated. He becomes a reporter; she ends up in a criminal gang. They finally meet, but she

can't tell him the truth. Attempting to flee from the gang boss, she is killed by an automobile.

Melodrama and crime.



1965

Sunset on the Sarbin River 사르빈강에 노을이 진다

A Korean college student, his name japanised as Masumoto, feels compelled to join the Imperial Army and do his bit for the war. To his fellow Korean recruits, he seems a martinet, much too eager to try to prove himself as the equal of the Japanese. He gets promoted and rejoins the unit as officer in charge. They are despatched to Burma where they are visited by a group of young Korean women of a 'teishintai': comfort women. On the way to the front, their truck is attacked, on the road again, they encounter a beautiful Burmese woman with her child. They give her a lift, and she drops a note about their movements to waiting guerrillas of the new independence army. She and Masumoto fall in love, while her guerrilla husband swears revenge for the death of their son at the hands of Japanese soldiers led by our hero. Only one of the triangle will be standing at the film's end.

Exotic romance embedded awkwardly within potentially important story of Korea's reluctant participation in Japan's imperial ambitions in SE Asia. Presence of Korean 'comfort women' appals Masumoto's young Korean privates, but he walks away. Later meets one of the woman, Moved by her story. Pairing of hunky Shin Yeong-kyun and voluptuous Kim Hye-jeong had been successful in war-espionage film released earlier that year, *The Battle of Incheon*.

Exported to Taiwan and Vietnam. Does not compare favourably in style or story with the Ichikawa Kon film *The Harp of Burma* (1956). A huge gap

between professionalism and resources of Japan's studios and the conditions under which Chung and other Korean directors worked.

Posters had proclaimed that the film made 'Bold Use of SE ASIAN locations!' It did not. But it did the best it could with borrowed footage and all the potted palms a gardening friend of Chung's could supply.

1965

**The Order to Kill* 살인명령

A spy is sent from North Korea to assassinate a defector, a university professor. The spy, one of the man's former students, realises his old mentor is good and wise. He turns himself in, the spy ring is captured.

Anti-communism and intrigue. Exported to Taiwan. Another pairing of Shin Yeong-kyun and Kim Hye-jeong.

1965

**The Married Woman* 유부녀

A couple live happily until the husband goes abroad to study. Bored and lonely, the wife drifts into an affair. Learning of the husband's plans to return, she commits suicide.

Melodrama. Very similar film – *When a Woman Confesses* – made in 1969 by Lee Man-hee with same female lead, the great Mun Jeong-suk.

1966

Fighters on the Wide Plain 광야의 결사대

Two brothers who had fought against Japan in Manchuria as part of the Korean Independence Army make their way back to Korea. The younger one is killed by brutal Chinese communist soldiers. Brother joins up with forces of Kuomintang to get revenge.

Anti-communism meets Manchurian Western action. Shin Yeong-kyun meets Kim Hye-jeong, again.

1966

Special Agent X-7 순간은 영원히

The KCIA learn that North Korea are smuggling gold via a secret operation based in Hong Kong. Special agent goes to Hong Kong, foils the plan, rounds up the spy ring with local help.

Anti-communism plus intrigue. Co-production with Hong Kong. Said to be the first of Chung's films to catch the eye of Run Run Shaw.

1966

Dangerous Youth 위험한 청춘

A young man seeks revenge for the ill treatment of his older sister by a wealthy married lover. He woos and becomes engaged to the man's daughter, turns up at his big house, and sneers in his face. Yet the two young people end up married despite it all.

The troubled youth/delinquent genre started with Kim Su-yong's 1964 film *Barefooted Youth*. It starred the handsome actor Shin Seong-il who plays the lead here as well. However, his character has few of the redeeming qualities of the young man in the 1964 film: he provides an unsettling sketch of misogynistic masculinity. Shin Seong-il paired with Mun Hee as his victim. The two proved to be a very bankable combination in many films.

1966

Yeraishang 예라이상

A young man is seriously injured during the student-led uprising of April 1960 which would chase President Syngman Rhee from office and out of Korea. He takes shelter with a woman who manages a nightclub. They fall in love. But he is a tutor to a rich man's daughter, and she falls for him. The father, wanting to grab him for his daughter, stages a party. He invites the other woman, humiliates her; she dashes out and is killed by an automobile.

Melodrama mixed with aspects of youth film. Title, meaning 'evening primrose', taken from a song made famous in the 1940s by the Japanese Empire's favourite song-bird, Li Hsiang-lien, a.k.a. Ri K ran, a.k.a. Yamaguchi Yoshiko, a.k.a. Shirley Yamaguchi. The film was a hit.

1966

**My Days Set in the Twilight* 내 청춘 황혼에 지다

Young man, orphaned during Korean War, is raised by boss of criminal gang. He falls for a nice girl working as pianist in a nightclub. He tries to go straight. Boss won't let him, even kills the pregnant girlfriend. Young man kills his adoptive father, then himself.

Melodrama, crime and youth. Mixed together in a vehicle for pairing of Shin Seong-il and Mun Hee.



1967

A Swordsman in the Twilight 황혼의 검객

A mysterious swordsman wanders into town. He saves a girl from abduction by a brutal policeman. One of them recognises him and runs to the local government compound to give warning: Kim Dae-won has returned, no doubt seeking vengeance. Kim attacks the compound, killing or capturing all the police, and takes the county governor hostage. As the night wears on, he gradually unfolds his story to the bound hostages. He and his family became collateral damage in the political and social strife caused by Jang Hui-bin and her allies. He now awaits the arrival of the ruthless Jang family ally, O Ki-ryeong, the man who plotted the destruction of his loving wife and little girl. They meet in a deadly showdown. Kim Dae-won wanders back out of town.

Perhaps the finest Korean muhyeop genre film. (*Muhyeop* 무협, the Korean reading of the Chinese characters 武俠 *wuxia*.) You can see why the Shaw Brothers were eager to sign him for their studio.

Chung recast certain scenes and characters from his 1961 film about the ambitious Jang Hui-bin, but they take on fresh meaning set within the tragedy of one family punished for their loyalty to the rightful queen Min. The cruel ruse by which O Ki-ryeong (played by veteran heavy Heo Jang-gang) destroys Dae-won's family is a clever plot twist yet still capable of shocking audiences.

Chung uses multiple flashbacks to bring us gradually, finally to the climactic scene. Kim Dae-won's tragedy has about it an almost Greek sense of suffering and puts the film on a scale different than that of most *muhyeop* or *wuxia* films. Namgung Won, as Kim Dae-won, gives perhaps the best performance of his long career.

DOCU- MENTARY

essayfilmfestival

On behalf of the Essay Film Festival, we would like to thank the Korean Cultural Centre UK for the invitation to participate in the selection of the documentary strand of the London Korean Film Festival. We have watched twenty-seven feature length documentaries and were asked to choose four films for the final selection. Most of these were submitted to the festival and a couple of them were recommended by our selection committee.

The films, all produced between 2014 and 2015, covered a wide scope of subjects and styles, generally displaying an overall concern for social engagement and the need to address, sometimes uncompromisingly, contemporary and topical questions. Some films dealt with the shared histories of collective labour struggles and union organising while others tackled environmental issues such as the proliferation of nuclear power and the preservation of nature, or ethical issues such as animal rights and industrial food production. While others looked disarmingly at how disabled people fit in society, at the role of the elderly, or at recent advances in LGBT rights in South Korea. Others still, considered the recent and past history of Korea, unearthing unknown stories and their enduring consequences, such as the history of the Soviet Korean people, the historical transformation of urban and rural landscape or even the hidden stories of Korean sports.

All things considered, we tried to select films that were able to exemplify that diversity of themes and approaches, reflecting at the same time the specific purposes and interests of a festival such as the Essay Film Festival. Our selection contains both personal and documentary essays, assertive and engaging, singling out individual and collective histories. We privileged films that were able to address topical and current themes in resolute ways and those truthful to their own form, original and coherent. Some of the films correspond to established forms of documentary filmmaking while others are more experimental and unexpected in their approach.

One of the most aesthetically interesting films among this year's section, *Collapse* correlates with the Essay Film in many ways. Pondering what life could be like raising a disabled child, filmmaker Lee Won-Woo, in collaboration with Mun Jeong-hyun, uses his camera to document and discover what potential restrictions his child may have to overcome.

Miryang Arirang - Legend of Miryang 2 by director Park Bae-il documents with great forcefulness the daily toil and struggles of a small community of mostly elderly peasant women from the Miryang region and their sustained resistance against the loss of their land to the construction of electrical towers feeding a power plant. Kim Eungsu's *The City in the Water* explores what is left from the cities, small villages and rural communities that disappeared under the water, flooded by the construction of the Chungju Dam which lasted from 1975 and concluded in 1985. *The Islands of Shadows*, through interviews and archive footage, documents over a period spanning 20 years the workers experience of the conditions on the shipyards and the circumstances which led them to form a union.

Ricardo Matos Cabo & Matthew Barrington
Essay Film Festival programmers

THE CITY IN THE WATER
물속의 도시 + Q&A
FRI 6 NOV 18:30
PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL

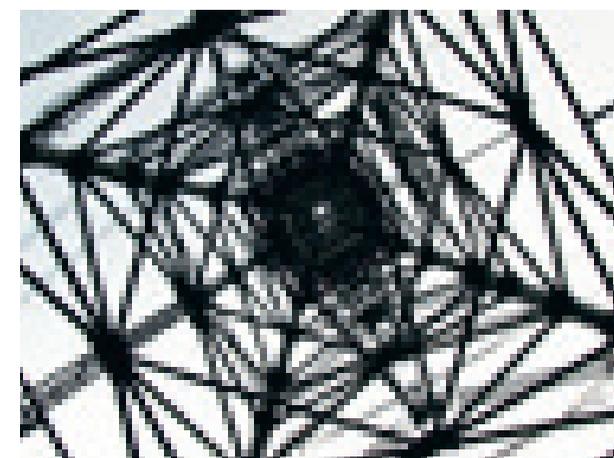


Q&A: director Kim Eungsu,
Essay Film Festival programmers

DIRECTOR: KIM EUNGSU
DOCUMENTARY | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 80MIN

Following the decade long construction of the Chungju Dam, which stretched from 1975 to 1985, a community was forever destroyed. *The City in the Water* explores what is left of the cities, small villages and rural communities that became submerged under the water. The Chungju Dam has created a complex network of over 100 artificial lakes covering an area of 40 kms dramatically altering the landscape and the lives of the people who once called this place their home. This once prosperous city which once boasted over 600 plus households has now, over the course of 30 years, seen these reduced to just 8. Kim Eungsu's audio-visual essay focuses on the histories of those who remain, eliciting memories from that which is lost. Engaging with the striking area and the people who have remained, the film's intensity stems from the director's approach to the landscape - he skims the water shot after shot in long pans creating a material tension between what's visible and what's not. He takes us on the board of a cruising tourist boat visiting the landscape, showing us how the lake has become something other than the history it contains, and turning all this into a memorable cinematic experience.

MIRYANG ARIRANG -
LEGEND OF MIRYANG 2
밀양 아리랑
WED 11 NOV 18:00
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON



DIRECTOR: PARK BAE-IL
CAST: KIM YOUNG-JA, PARK EUN-SUK, KIM MAL-HEA, SON HEE-KEONG
DOCUMENTARY | 2015 | CERT. 15 | 106MIN

In 2001, plans were unveiled for the building of 52 765kV-transmission towers in the rural community of Miryang, to transfer electricity from a nuclear power plant to city areas. Initially, residents of the idyllic area paid little heed to the news but as they gradually realised the devastating impact the towers would have on their lives and livelihoods as simple farmers, they began to speak out. Not only did their words fall on deaf ears but democratic procedures were ignored and the (mostly elderly) villagers began to see their land taken from them and the construction expedited by force. *Miryang Arirang: Legend of Miryang 2* documents the villagers' plight, follows their increasingly desperate efforts to prevent the towers from being built and deftly details the often violent dangers they face at the hands of corporate authorities and the law.

THE ISLAND OF SHADOWS
그림자들의 섬
 TUE 10 NOV 18:30
 ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART



DIRECTOR: KIM JEONGKEUN
 CAST: KIM JIN-SOOK, PARK SUNG-HO, KIM JI-YEON, PARK HEE-CHAN,
 YUN GUK-SUNG, JUNG YI-GYUN, JUNG TAE-HOON, JIN SANG-WOO
 DOCUMENTARY | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 99MIN

Hanjin Heavy Industries was founded in 1937 and was the first shipbuilding company in Korea. It has since gone on to become one of the world's leading shipbuilders. *The Islands of Shadows*, through interviews and archive footage, documents over a period spanning 20 years the workers experience of the conditions on the shipyards and the circumstances which led to them forming a union. *The Island of Shadow* is extremely powerful in telling the stories of the workers' struggle. Reflecting a burgeoning trend for Korean documentaries addressing themes of protest and unionising. This film is one of the strongest recent films addressing this subject. There is both an attempt made to provide historical context to the workers' situation, a linking of their struggle to the social upheaval in the 1980s protests and other expressions of discontent while remaining focused on the stories of the individual workers and their thoughts, opinions and stories. A key theme throughout the film is to examine what happens to those who are stripped of their dignity, and the ramifications of the workers' decision to stand up to their employers. *The Islands of Shadows* is a clear and engaging documentary despite telling an increasingly complicated and sombre narrative. The film has the potential to inspire audiences through the passion and commitment of the workers despite the bleak situations they encounter.

COLLAPSE
붕괴
 MON 9 NOV 18:30
 PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL



DIRECTOR: LEE WON-WOO, MUN JEONG-HYUN
 CAST: KIM MIN-WOO
 DOCUMENTARY | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 78MIN

Collapse initially appears to be a straightforward documentary focusing on a group of disabled adults but while that subject matter does form a significant part of the narrative's early stages, a far more intimate and experimental cinematic work soon emerges. For, while director Mun Jeong-hyun films the ongoing activities of the members of the 'Jesus Love Club' fears grow that his soon to be born child may suffer from Down's Syndrome. As if that wasn't enough of a worry to deal with on its own, the collapse of a building close to the director's residence leads to further angst and fears of life unravelling, on almost a daily basis. Ultimately, *Collapse* is both a documenting of perhaps the most difficult period in Mun Jeong-hyun's life and a story of strength in the face of adversity.

FILM
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Paddington
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MISE-EN-SCÈNE SHORTS



The Mise-en-scène Short Film Festival (MSFF) is one of the most prestigious short film festivals in Korea. The MSFF differentiates itself from other short film festivals by trying the new concept that sees short films categorized by genre. In other words, the basic idea of MSFF is that it would be interesting and fresh to view short films within the genre tradition and also to read against the grain at the same time. MSFF proudly presents a variety of Korea short films annually under the catchphrase of «Beyond the Barrier of Genres.» The festival is held every June in Seoul, Korea, and 2015 sees the 14th instalment of this great event.

MISE-EN-SCÈNE 1 SUN 8 NOV 21:00 KOREAN CULTURAL CENTRE



M.BOY 엠보이

DIRECTOR: KIM HYO-JEONG
CAST: JANG GYEONG-EOP, CHAE SU-BIN
FANTASY | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 26MIN

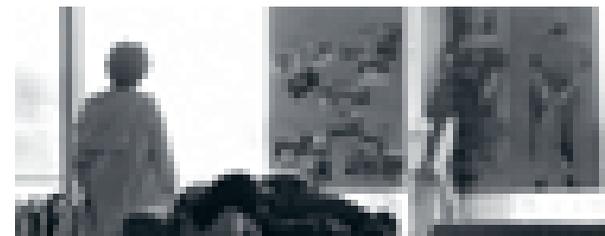
A highly original take on the subject of bullying in Korean schools, *M.Boy* mixes a hard-hitting drama of adolescent bodily changes with bloodstained, and surprising, horror elements to detail a teenage boy's battle against peer persecution and torment and his desperate efforts to find a connection with a beautiful young girl.



THE PHOTOGRAPHERS 출사

DIRECTOR: YOO JAE-HYUN
CAST: KIM YE-EUN, LEE HUI-SEONG, LEE OK-BONG
HORROR, FANTASY | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 16MIN 10SEC

A young woman travels on foot around a remote region, taking photographs as she goes, but almost every time she clicks her camera's shutter she hears whistles being blown. As she continues on her journey, she meets a young boy who explains that the whistles are blown to let photographers know that 'something interesting' is taking place. Without further ado, the young woman follows the boy to see what is of such interest.



SUNRISE 일출

DIRECTOR: YANG KYUNG-MO
SOCIAL DRAMA | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 23MIN

Photography is often what is left of something that has been already past or lost, such sentiment surrounds *Sunrise*. Through black and white cinematography and past-tensed narration, the film tells a story of five girls who a while ago went on a trip organized by the university's amateur photography society. As the harmonious atmosphere among the girls becomes ruined by the emergence of senior boys, one cannot help but realize that the truth is more than merely recorded events.



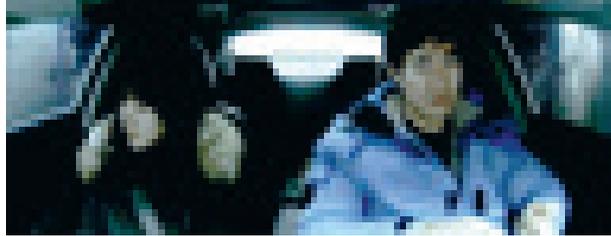
CARTWHEEL 옆구르기

DIRECTOR: AHN JU-YOUNG
CAST: CHOI JUNG-EUN, KIM YUN-HA
COMEDY | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 30MIN

Eun-jeong is a high school girl who is consistently late for class. Her mp3 player doesn't work but she cannot afford a new one, and every time she is caught trying to sneak over the school wall her PE teacher makes her do exercises, which she hates. Not only that, but in PE class, try as she might, she cannot manage to do a cartwheel. However, the appearance of a boy she likes on the PE field soon changes her focus from mp3 players to successfully doing a cartwheel, once and for all.

MISE-EN-SCÈNE 2

MON 9 NOV 21:00
KOREAN CULTURAL CENTRE



JANUS 야누스

DIRECTOR: KIM SUNG-HWAN
CAST: CHOI MOON, CHOI JAE-HION
ACTION, THRILLER | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 15MIN

In the depth of winter on a snow-covered road, a couple accidentally knock down a child with their car. Frantic, the woman locks herself in the vehicle while the man demands she help him hide the body. And so, the woman's inner conflict begins.



THE STRAIT GATE 좁은 길

DIRECTOR: SON MIN-YOUNG
CAST: JO EUI-JIN, PARK JOO-YONG
SOCIAL DRAMA | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 38MIN

Through the story of two flatmates – one a pickup service driver studying to pass through the 'strait gate' of exam success, the other a delivery man – *The Strait Gate* deftly details the pressures of life below the poverty line in South Korea. However, when a tragic accident takes place those daily stresses and strains become a fight for survival within desperate efforts to prevent lives from falling apart entirely.



SUMMER'S TAIL 여름의 끝자락

DIRECTOR: KWAK SAE-MI, PARK YONG-JAE
CAST: YOON GEUM-SEON-A, SHIN U-HUI, YEON JI-HAE
MELODRAMA | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 39MIN

Kyung-hee and Ju-yeon are young women who have been virtually inseparable since they were very young, Ju-yeon being incredibly protective of her best friend. When a new girl starts at their school, Kyung-hee instantly warms to her leaving Ju-yeon feeling that she is losing the one person she cares for. However, the girl in question's father has enticed Ju-yeon's dad into gambling on dog fighting, leading to a situation that will alter the lives of all three girls drastically and tragically.

MISE-EN-SCÈNE 3

TUE 10 NOV 21:00
KOREAN CULTURAL CENTRE



WHO IS IT 누구인가

DIRECTOR: SON GI-HO
COMEDY | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 28MIN

A theatre director wants to create a play that answers the question "Who can tell me who I am?" He decides to use a play written by a man trying to understand himself and employs an actress desperate to know how her past relates to her present. As the play begins to take shape, past associations, jealous and betrayal force all involved to face who they really are.



HAPPY TOGETHER 님의 침묵

DIRECTOR: LEE JEONG-MIN
MELODRAMA | 2014 | CERT. TBC | 39MIN

A man and a woman who are employed by the same company are secretly involved in a romantic relationship and are seemingly very much in love. However, when the man is killed in an accident, the woman discovers that he was engaged to be married to someone else. Desperate to know the truth about her lover, she begins to wonder if she actually knew him at all.



THE SCOUNDRELS 불한당들

DIRECTOR: AHN SEUNG-HYUK
CAST: HAN JI-WON, LEE DONG-YONG, LEE SUNG-WOOK
ACTION, THRILLER | 2015 | CERT. TBC | 25MIN

Yun-hong lives with her mother in a mountain village but the boredom that fills her secluded life makes her yearn for the big city. So, without a word to her mother, she packs a bag and leaves for Seoul. As she heads off on her journey, she witnesses a man fighting with and killing her uncle and on attempting to escape she is chased. Realizing that the thug may well know who her mother is, Yun-hong's journey takes a desperate and immediate u-turn, in an attempt to save her before it is too late.

FILM AND HISTORY

THE KOREAN EXAMPLE

Cinema has become a battle ground upon which history is made – a major mass medium of the twentieth century dealing with history. The re-enactments of historical events in film straddle reality and fantasy, documentary and fiction, representation and performance, entertainment and education. The filmic forms of collective cultural memory offer wide-ranging research possibilities in the fields of history, film, media and cultural studies.

This interdisciplinary conference aims to explore the changing modes, impacts and functions of screen images dealing with history with the case study of Korean cinema. The relationship between film and history and the links between historical research and filmic presentations of history will be examined by scholars from nine countries, researching in literature, history, Korean culture, film and media studies, as well as by the keynote speaker Professor Kim Hong-Joon of the Korea National University of Arts. Celebrating the 10th London Korean Film Festival, the guests at the festival will make a special panel contribution.

Organised by the Centre of Korean Studies and the Centre for Film Studies, SOAS, University of London
Supported by the Korean Cultural Centre UK.

THU 5 NOV SOAS, DLT

9.45

Opening Conference / Welcoming Remarks

- Hyunseon Lee (Organiser, SOAS)
- Grace Koh (CKS, SOAS)
- Lindiwe Dovey (CFS, SOAS)
- Kabsoo Kim (KCCUK)

10.00 – 11.30

Cold War and Films: Korean War - Vietnam War

- Theodore Hughes (Columbia University): History and Intimacy in Early Korean War Films
- Hyunseon Lee (SOAS, UoL): Korean War Melodramas: Nation, Brotherhood, Remembrance
- Jong Chol An (University of Tübingen): From Existential Agony to Ideological Division: Korean Film Understanding of the Vietnam War (1964-1975) during the Post-Cold War Era

11.45 – 13.15

Recent Historical Films

- Kyung Jo Min (KCL): Rewriting the Premodern History of Roaring Currents and the Whirling Self of Contemporary South Korea
- Hyung-Sook Lee (Ewha Womans Univ./USC): Rewriting History and Hybrid Genres in Contemporary Korean Cinema
- Sofia Murell (University of Amsterdam): A Blurred Renaissance: Aesthetics of Socio-political Representation in Contemporary South Korean Films

14.30 – 16.00

Cinematic Discourses of Gender, Body and Modern History

- Jinhee Choi (KCL): Girls that Remember; Girls that Disappear. Korean Modern History and Girlhood
- Teréz Vincze (Eötvös Loránd University): Embodied History – Symbolic Use of Bodies in the Cinematic Representation of Korean History
- Andrew Sanggyu Lee (Columbia University): Screening the Image of New Women in Late Colonial-Period Korean Films: Melodramatic Excess, Place of Innocence, and Ambiguous Imperial Subjects

16.30 – 18.00

Auteur Cinema and the Art of Memory

- Jennifer O'Meara (Maynooth University): Park Chan-wook's Vengeance Trilogy: An Allegorical or Exploitative Take on Korea's Violent Past?
- Hee-seung Irene Lee (The University of Auckland): Melancholic Screen for Korea's Lost Memory: Lee Chang-dong's Secret *Sunshine* (2007) and *Poetry* (2010)
- Wikanda Promkhuntong (Aberystwyth University): Home Video Distribution History and the Making of a South Korean Cult Auteur

18.15 – 19.15

Keynote Lecture

- Hong-Joon Kim (Korea National University of Arts): Witnesses Witnessed: Reflections on the Lives and Times of Three Korean Master Filmmakers

FRI 6 NOV KCCUK

10.00 – 11.30

Japan in Postcolonial Korea: Cinema, Historicity, and the Politics of Memory

- Hwajin Lee (Inha University): Postcolonial Love Story in Hyeonhaetan: Melodramatic Version of Commemoration on Colonial History in the 1960s
- Hyekyong Sim (Soonchunhyang University): A Girl-Martyr YU Gwansun as "Jeanne d'Arc of Korea": Between Making National Biopics and Embracing Hollywood Biopics in Liberation Korea
- Woohyung Chon (Konkuk University): Outside of the History and the Classic: Costume Drama The Wedding Day
- Hieyoon Kim (UCLA): Making Cinema Historical: Genres of Historical Writing and Their Archives in the 1960s

11.45 – 13.15

Symbolic Spaces of Modernity

- Park, Mi Sook (The University of Sheffield): Rebuilding South Korea's National Image Through Memory and Everyday Life
- Youngmin Choe (USC): Money and Interiority in Korean Cinema
- Min Jeong Ko (University of Gothenburg): Re-telling Recent History through Film

14.00 – 15.30

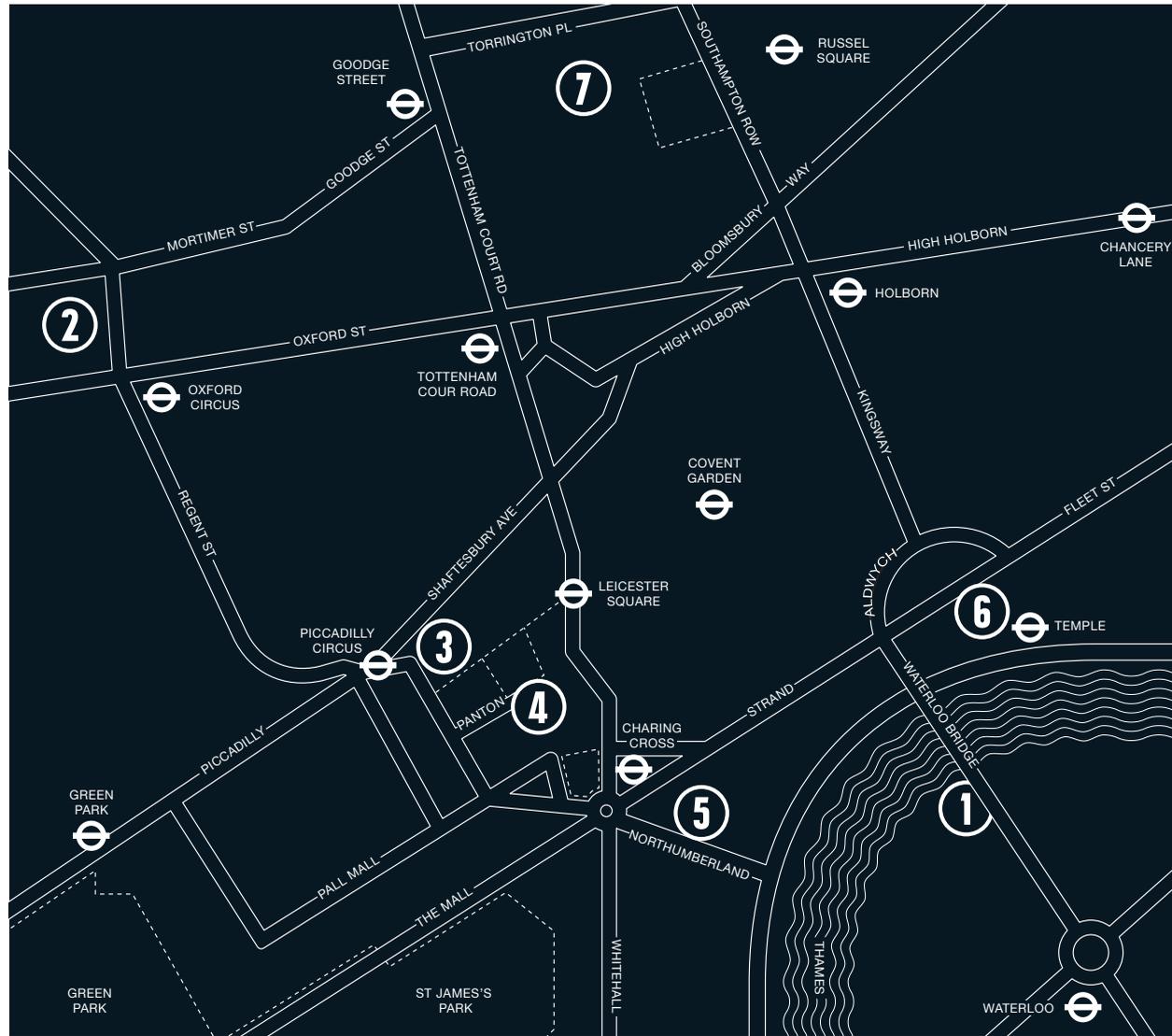
Processing Memory in the Transcultural

- Joseph Jonghyun Jeon (Pomona College, USA): Wire Aesthetics
- Ulf C. Lepelmeier (University of Bayreuth): The Need of Reprocessing South Korea's Radical Changes – How the Korean Cinema Deals with the Pressures of Globalisation, Hypercapitalism and the Anxiety of Losing Cultural Identity
- Lee, Seung-Ah (UCLA): The Lightness of the Present: Representation of the Colonial Period in Assassination

16.00 – 17.30

The Crossover between Independent Film-making and International film festival

- Jang Kun-jae (Director of *A Midsummer's Fatasia & Sleepless Night*)
- Nam Dong-chul (BIFF Programmer)



1. BFI SOUTHBANK

Belvedere Road
South Bank
SE1 8XT

2. REGENT STREET CINEMA

309 Regent Street
W1B 2UW

3. PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL

20-24 Shaftesbury Avenue
Piccadilly
W1D 7DH

4. ODEON PANTON STREET

11/18 Panton Street
SW1Y 4DP

5. KOREAN CULTURAL CENTRE

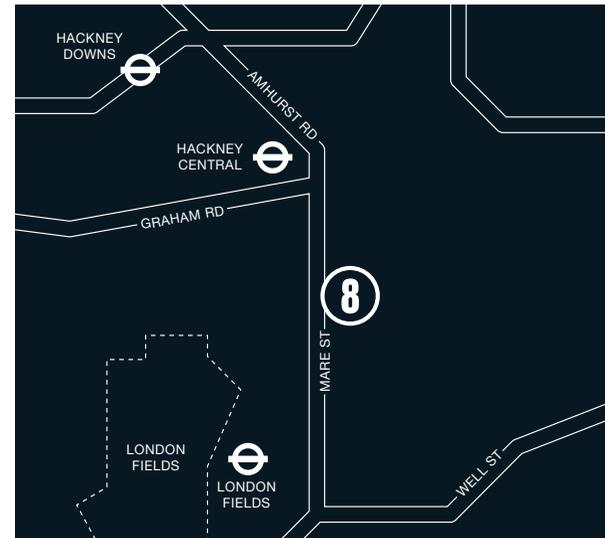
1-3 Strand
WC2N 5JR

6. KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Strand
WC2R 2LS

7. SOAS

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WC1H 0XG

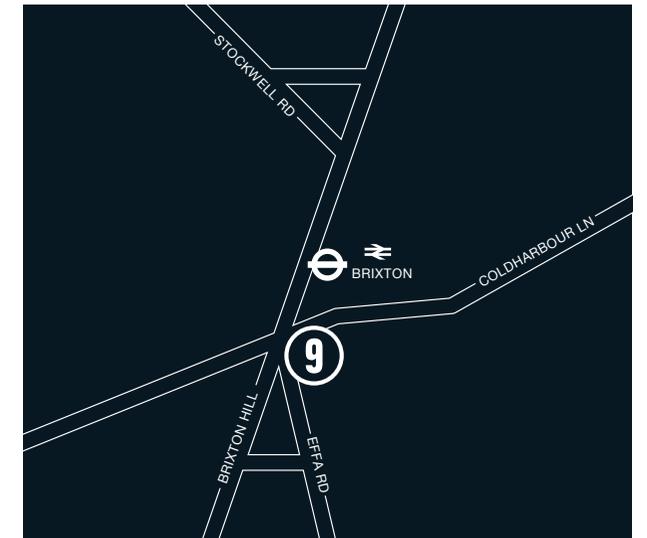


8. PICTUREHOUSE HACKNEY

270 Mare Street
E8 1HE

9. PICTUREHOUSE RITZY

Brixton Oval
Coldharbour Lane
SW2 1JG



10. ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

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11. ODEON KINGSTON

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Thank you to all of our volunteers

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