

A man and a woman are shown from the chest up, wearing winter clothing. The man on the left is wearing a grey flat cap, a mustache, a white shirt, a patterned scarf, and a grey jacket. The woman on the right is wearing a brown hat, a fur collar, and a light-colored coat. They are both looking off to the side with slight smiles.

SOPHIA'S CHOICE

PROUDLY PRESENTS

ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA

YOUR PASSPORT TO ASIAN CINEMA

Contemporary Films with English Subtitles

SEASON 18

March 20 - April 21, 2024

In Cinema • Online

SOPHIA'S CHOICE

Proudly Presents



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MEDIA PARTNERS



From THE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

As Asian Pop-Up Cinema (APUC) prepares to begin its new season, we are excited to have already hosted three fully-booked free screenings for our subscribers in conjunction with the Lunar New Year – Year of the Dragon. One of these screenings, **PERFECT DAYS**, directed by award-winning director Wim Wenders and starring Koji Yakusho, is an Academy Award nominee for Best International Feature Film. The film has already won the Best Actor award from the 76th Cannes Film Festival. This film serves as “a reminder that even in the most unassuming lives, there exists a world of wonder and wisdom waiting to be discovered.” Meanwhile **THE MONK AND THE GUN** directed by Pawo Choyning Dorji is a cultural journey and “political comedy”, based somewhat on actual circumstance exploring the opportunities and challenges of implementing democracy within isolated high-altitude Kingdom of Bhutan.

Continuing in the spirit of our sneak peek choices, our current season will show four international premieres and ten N. American/U.S. premieres which include exciting action, comedy, drama, thriller, romance, horror and art-house films from Hong Kong, Japan, China, South Korea, Canada/Vietnam, Canada/India and Taiwan. Coming with their films are directors, producers and/or main cast from the films entitled **RU, A BOY AND A GIRL**, **THE YOUNG HOODLUM**, **DRIFTING FLOWERS**, **FLOWING DAYS**, **SHANKAR'S FAIRIES**, **IT REMAINS**, **BAND FOUR**, and **WE ARE FAMILY**.

This season, we are thrilled to inaugurate our first ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA AT THE BLOCK MUSEUM program in collaboration with the Northwestern University Asian Languages and Cultures department in Evanston. This program will feature four hand-picked films intended to engage Northwestern community as well as the local community. Two of these films will be attended by their directors coming from Japan and from Canada. All screenings are admissions free but advance RSVP is required.

Lastly, Hong Kong actor **CARLOS CHAN** will receive our **BIGT STAR AWARD** before the feature presentation of the closing night film **WE ARE FAMILY** - a touching Hong Kong comedy where family existence is treated as if it were some kind of civil war—with an irresistible sense of humor. As part of a celebration of Carlos' acting career, we are offering two other films starring Carlos online, **READY O/R KNOT** and **READY O/R ROT** that are “peppered with mature insights into relationships and words of wisdom about life's unpredictable turns.”

Get your tickets early! Our handpicked program promises to be **elevating, sophisticated, and told with a distinctive voice.**

S. Wong Boccio

Sophia Wong Boccio

Founder & Executive Director

Sophia's Choice Presents: Asian Pop-Up Cinema

THANK YOU

We want to take this opportunity of thanking the following companies and individuals for their generous gifts and assistance in the planning and presentation of Season 18:

ADG Group, Angela Leung, Alex Vazquez, Aurora Lee, Bronwyn T. Poole & Peter Schmitz, Chris Huang, Desmond Yang, Dom Presto, Emily T. & John Chen, Edward Chan, Emily Long, Eric Chou, Felix Tsang, Fukun Wang, Grace Chan, Pearl Cheung, Rebecca Fons, Jason Lesniewicz, Jeanne Lamy-Belzil, Jimmy Jian, Jonathan Alvarez, Joy Zavala, Leslie Lam, Liuyang Cao, Lucie Boulet, Maria A. Ruggieri, Marie-Hélène Lamarche, Megan Nakano, Michael C. Boccio, Michelle Leung, Michelle Son, Miki ZEZE, Noel Khan, Patricia Yung, Rainbow Fong, Ryan Chan, Sanling Chang, Shinji Sakota, Sin Wang, Stephen Toyota, Sunny Seo, Tony Cheng, Ty Yamamoto, Van Choi, Won J. Park and Yalin Chi.

Acknowledge with thanks matching gift received from Crowe Foundation.

BIG THANK YOU GOES TO OUR CUTURAL PARTNERS!



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Congratulations!

CARLOS CHAN

Recipient of
**BRIGHT
STAR**

Award

CARLOS CHAN 陳家樂

Hong Kong actor Carlos Chan began his entertainment career in 2003, when he joined the International Chinese New Talent Singing Championship and subsequently signed with Emperor Entertainment Group. In 2008, he made his film acting debut with “Happily Ever Actor”, playing the second male lead. He has since acted in over 40 films and television series. In 2016, his co-starring performance alongside Kara Wai in 2016’s “Happiness” was praised as a major breakthrough performance for Chan, earning him the Best New Actor of the Year award at the 11th Chinese Young Generation Film Forum and a nomination for Best Supporting Actor at the 7th Macau International Movie Festival. His performance in the 2018 TV series “Daddy Cool” made his popularity soar. His most recent performances in films such as “Ready o/r Knot,” “Raging Fire”, “Detectives vs Sleuths” and “The Goldfinger” have also been well-received.





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Opening Night

RU

U.S. PREMIERE

**Wednesday, March 20, 6:30 PM at Alliance Française de Chicago
(810 N. Dearborn St, Chicago, IL 60610)**

Canada | Drama | 2024 | 116 minutes

In French/Vietnamese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Charles-Olivier Michaud

SCRIPT AND DIALOGUE: Jacques Davidts

STARRING: Chloé Djandji, Chantal Thuy, Jean Bui, Olivier Dinh, Xavier Nguyen, Patrice Robitaille, Karine Vanasse, Mali Corbeil Gauvreau, Marie-Thérèse Fortin

FILM SOURCE: IMMINIA FILMS

Vietnamese Canadian actor Jean Bui is scheduled to appear to introduce the film and participate in a post-film Q&A with the audience.

Inspired by Kim Thúy's award-winning novel, RU follows the arrival of a young Vietnamese girl named Tinh in Quebec. After a dangerous sea crossing and a stay in a Malaysian refugee camp, Tinh and her family arrive in Quebec where they begin a new life. Thanks to the warm welcome from all, including their sponsor family, she slowly adapts to her new reality. Tinh will overcome her shyness to learn a new language, discover a new culture and adjust to a new life in Quebec.

This program is made possible in part by the Quebec Government Office in Chicago and Francophonie 2024 in collaboration with the Alliance Française de Chicago.

Stills/Photos Credits: Drowster



DIRECTOR
Charles-Olivier
Michaud

Québec



Alliance Française
Chicago



Canada
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A BOY AND A GIRL 少男少女

N. AMERICAN PREMIERE

Saturday, March 23, 2:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Taiwan | Crime, Family | 2023 | 140 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR/SCREENWRITER: Hsu Li-Da

STARRING: Travis Hu, Kira Skelly, Kris Kuan, Frederick Lee, Yao Chun Yao, Harry Chang

FILM SOURCE: Sanling Chang

Director Hsu Li-Da, producer Tang Tsai-Yang and actress Kira Skelly are scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and post-film Q&A.

Q & A Moderator: Patrick McDonald

In a declining small town, an idle boy encounters a heartbroken girl. Seeking to leave their town behind, they organize a plan to pay for their escape.

A BOY AND A GIRL is director/screenwriter Hsu Li-Da's story of "raw" and "simple" emotions about the experience of teenagers. The film examines the struggle and fear to be independent while their personalities are being shaped, the unclear logic between good and evil, and the hazy process of understanding love and sex.



DIRECTOR
Hsu Li-Da



THE YOUNG HOODLUM 壞男孩

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

Saturday, March 23 at 7:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Taiwan | Drama, Crime | 2023 | 79 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Yu Jhi Han

STARRING: Wu Chien-He, Joseph Huang, Si pangoyod, Pan Chin-Yu, Sharon Huang

FILM SOURCE: Mandarin Vision Co., Ltd.

Director Yu Jhi Han and actor Joseph Huang are scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and post-film Q&A.

Q & A Moderator: Patrick McDonald

Following four youngsters from dysfunctional families who meet a rich runaway girl, their innocent and fun relationship leads to a shocking crime that pushes all of them to the point of no return.

Director Yu Jhi-han, made this first feature debut to expose the truth- about youth crimes that occur today in Taiwan. Through this story he also shows what "brotherhood" means among the four youngsters.



DIRECTOR
Yu Jhi Han



AFTER SCHOOL 成功補習班

U.S. PREMIERE

Sunday, March 24 at 2:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Taiwan | Drama | 2023 | 124 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & SCREENWRITER: Blue Lan

STARRING: Zhan Huai-Yun, Yi Tai Chiu, Phil Hou, Charlize Lamb, Wu Chien Ho

FILM SOURCE: Mandarin Vision Co., Ltd.

In 1994, three troublesome students navigate forbidden love and evolving friendships at a strict cram school.* Their lives take a transformative turn when they meet their unconventional English teacher, Mickey, and embark on a journey of self-discovery. Will they find love, understanding, and their true place in youth before the end of their last summer together?

"AFTER SCHOOL is a cheeky coming-of-age story about growing up in the 1990s. It successfully captures the nostalgia of adolescence, from playful pranks to silly misadventures. The teenage protagonists may be involved in wild shenanigans, but these scenes feel oddly comforting. I enjoy experiencing the carefree joy that is associated with youth. My favorite moments in this movie are whenever the characters behave goofily. AFTER SCHOOL excels in being cheerful, lighthearted, and whimsical." - BLwatcher.com

* A "cram school" trains its students to pass specific entrance examinations for selective high schools or universities.



DIRECTOR
Blue Lan



CHINHUA'S BLOSSOM UNFOLDS 一蕊金花

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

March 23-29, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Taiwan | Documentary | 2024 | 27 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Ming-Hsia Wang

CINEMATOGRAPHER: Sheng-Li Kang

FILM SOURCE: Talking Light Films

At the ripe old age of 102, Chinhua Ho Chen, "Miss Golden Blossom", takes center stage. In 1938, her voice graced the tracks of "Endless Spring" and "The Camellia Lady", released by Victory Records, under the stage name "Yingying". She also stands as the first among renowned female singers of Taiwan's popular ditties. Through Miss Chinhua, we hear the echoes of the once renowned singer Yingying, preserving the distinct voices of Taiwan in popular music and song.



DIRECTOR
Ming-Hsia Wang

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[EVENTIVE.ORG/](https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome)
WELCOME





ON THE TRAIN 南方，寂寞鐵道

U.S. PREMIERE

March 23-29, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Taiwan | Documentary | 2023 | 106 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Chu-chen Hsiao

FILM SOURCE: Activator Co. Ltd.

Director Hsiao and the production team spent five years making this documentary, exploring the stories of the engineers who built the South Link Line. Director Hsiao was able to record the last magnificent, unsophisticated features of the line before the electrification of this railroad. Most of the old trains and platforms in the documentary no longer exist.

ON THE TRAIN presents three generations of engineers and their collective memories of growing up and the romance of their own youth.



DIRECTOR
Chu-chen Hsiao

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GOD MAN DOG 流浪神狗人

SPECIAL ENCORE

March 23-29, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Taiwan | Drama | 2007 | 119 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Singing Chen

STARRING: Tarcy Su, Jack Kao, Ulau Ugan, Jonathan Chang, Han Chang,
Xiao-han Tu

FILM SOURCE: Activator Co. Ltd.

A meandering truck full of gods are mixed up with a cast of outcasts whose lives gradually entwine with one another. Yellow Bull, the owner of the truck, travels around giving shelter to deserted god statues yet can't afford to have his artificial leg fixed. Biung, an alcoholic aboriginal, transports premium quality peaches between a remote village and Taipei city yet finds himself less valued than even a peach. Ching, a depressed middle-class wife, attempts to redeem her marriage after the death of her newborn. Then there's a fatal car accident caused by a stray dog. Can it change their lives and put an end to the obvious and distinct boundaries between them?

"GOD MAN DOG is a genuine attempt at ambitious storytelling that rewards - not punishes - involved audiences with its payoff. With solid performances, an impressive screenplay, beautiful cinematography, and a stirring score by Hiromichi Sakamoto, GOD MAN DOG proves that there is still hope for Taiwanese cinema." - *Kelvin Ma*



DIRECTOR
Singing Chen

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U MOTHERBAKER 我的婆婆怎麼把OO搞丟了

U.S. PREMIERE

March 23-29, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Taiwan | Comedy | 2023 | 113 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Danny Teng

FILM SOURCE: Creative Century

Cake shop owner Tsai-Siang Lin finds herself in trouble when she becomes the last person to meet OO. Can Tsai-Siang, with the help of her family, find the missing pop star?

U MOTHERBAKER is a light-hearted film sequel to the popular Taiwanese television family comedy series of the same name. Released during the Chinese New Year, the film is hilariously funny and family friendly.



DIRECTOR
Danny Teng

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EVENTIVE.ORG/
WELCOME](https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome)



CAT KISS

N. AMERICAN PREMIERE

Saturday, March 30 at 2:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

S. Korea | Fiction | 2022 | 121 minutes

In Korean w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & WRITER: Hwang Soo-bin

STARRING: Oh Dong-min, Ryu A-bel

FILM SOURCE: M-Line Distribution

A fairytale writer Yong-hee is living a soulless life after losing his wife. He's been unable to enter the room where his wife used to paint without hyperventilating. One day, he hears strange sounds from the room, and discovers a kitten inside. It turns out that his son had secretly hidden the kitten in the room! Yong-hee struggles with both entering the room itself and catching the cat. Meanwhile Ro-an, a neighbor and carpenter, suggests making this abandoned room into a cat room.



DIRECTOR
Hwang Soo-bin



ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA *at the Block Museum*

In collaboration with the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at Northwestern University, Asian Pop-Up Cinema is proud to bring four films from China, India, Japan, and South Korea respectively to the Block Museum's auditorium at Northwestern University's Evanston campus. We invite the Northwestern community as well as the local community to join us in this new program featuring films reflecting on contemporary social issues and fostering a shared appreciation for Asian art and culture. We hope this event will contribute to a vibrant cultural exchange, creating meaningful connections among members of Northwestern and surrounding communities.

This exciting initiative is made possible through the generous support of Northwestern University's Block Museum of Art, Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, WCAS Language Resource Center, Council on Language Instruction, Radio/Television/Film Program and Documentary Film Media of School of Communication. We extend our special gratitude to the Simeon Leland Forum for their support. The forum, established by members of the University community, acknowledges Simeon E. Leland's outstanding contributions to the University's cultural life during his tenure as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 1946 to 1966.

Congratulations to the inaugural

ASIAN POP-UP CINEMA AT THE BLOCK MUSEUM

Northwestern
Asian Languages
and Cultures
Northwestern
WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
Language Resource Center

Northwestern
THE BLOCK
museum of art
Northwestern
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION
Department of Radio/Television/Film

Northwestern
BUFFETT INSTITUTE
FOR GLOBAL AFFAIRS
Northwestern
WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
Council on Language Instruction



Wed April 3, 5:30 PM
@ Block Museum of Art
(Auditorium)
Post film discussion
led by Ron Falzone



Thurs April 4, 5:30 PM
@ Block Museum of Art
(Auditorium)
Director Yutaka Tsunemachi on hand
for the Intro and Q&A



Wed April 10, 5:30 PM
@ Block Museum of Art
(Auditorium)
Director Irfana Majumdar on hand
for the Intro and Q&A



Thurs April 11, 5:30 PM
@ Block Museum of Art
(Auditorium)
Post film discussion led by
Ron Falzone



MY FAVORITE LOVE STORY

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

ADMISSION FREE. RSVP REQUIRED.

**Wednesday, April 3 at 5:30 PM at Block Museum of Art (Auditorium)
(40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, IL 60208)**

S. Korea | Romance, Science Fiction, Musical | 2023 | 96 minutes

In Korean w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Lee Won-Hoi

STARRING: Shin Joo-Hyup, Kang Hye-In

FILM SOURCE: M-Line Distribution

Post film discussion led by Ron Falzone, festival's in-house lecturer

In the near future in Seoul, Oliver and Claire are abandoned helper robots stuck in a rut. One day, Claire knocks on Oliver's door to borrow a charger and they've grown closer ever since. Oliver, hoping to meet his former owner again, and Claire, dreaming of seeing fireflies, decide to leave for Jeju Island and travel like the humans. During the unexpected journey, they end up falling in love.

MY FAVORITE LOVE STORY is a whimsical Broadway-style musical created by a young filmmaker from South Korea. Audiences in America will find some familiarity in the melodies even without knowing the lyrics! The two lead actors' performances are deliberately "robotic" but with a hint of "sweetness" and before you know it you're falling in love with these two "simple-minded" robots!



DIRECTOR
Lee Won-Hoi

at the Block Museum



DRIFTING FLOWERS, FLOWING DAYS この日々が凧いだら

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

ADMISSION FREE. RSVP REQUIRED.

Thursday, April 4 at 5:30 PM at Block Museum of Art (Auditorium)
(40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, IL 60208)

Japan | Drama | 2022 | 85 minutes

In Japanese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Yutaka Tsunemachi

STARRING: Kaho Seto, Hiroki Sato

FILM SOURCE: Asian Shadows Films



DIRECTOR
Yutaka Tsunemachi

First time feature director Yutaka Tsunemachi is scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and post-film Q&A moderated by Ron Falzone.

The film follows the daily lives of Hiroto, Futaba and Daigo in Tokyo. Hiroto works at a construction site, Futaba at a flower shop, Daigo in a design studio. Things gradually begin to change when they start questioning the here and now and what's next. When Hiroto and Futaba learn they must move out of their apartment because it will be torn down, more doubts arise than just where to search for a new place. What will the future be like?

Wearing multiple hats as scriptwriter, director, editor and producer of the film, first time feature director Yutaka tries to capture the "feelings" of young people that are stuck in a daily "mundane" life with questions about whether or not there is a different type of future ahead.

at the *Block Museum*



TAKANO TOFU 高野豆腐店

U.S. CONTINENT PREMIERE

Saturday, April 6 at 2:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Japan | Drama | 2023 | 120 minutes

In Japanese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Mitsuhiro Mihara

PRODUCER(S): Shoji Masui, Takao Tsuchimoto, Masahiko Yamakawa

STARRING: Tatsuya Fuji, Kumiko Aso, Kumi Nakamura, Yu Tokui, Sugawara Daaikichi

FILM SOURCE: Shinji Sakota



DIRECTOR
Mitsuhiro Mihara

"Tatsuo and his daughter Haru run the Takano Tofu Store in Onomichi, Japan. They begin their work before dawn every day, carefully selecting beans to make their tofu. While the days are peaceful, Tatsuo learns he is in poor health and worries about Haru, who has returned home after a divorce, being alone after his death. With the help of some friends, he sets about planning a secret matchmaking strategy to find Haru a partner. At the same time, as Tatsuo prepares for the inevitable, he gets friendly with Fumie, who he bumps into during a hospital visit. TAKANO TOFU is a father-daughter story, a heartfelt drama about lifelong old friends, and a love letter to the bucolic Japanese 'small town' life." - Excerpt from Hawaii International Film Festival.

"Played by Tatsuya Fuji, star of Nagisa Oshima's notorious X-rated drama IN THE REALM OF SENSES," has made a late-career specialty of playing grumpy old men. At 82, Fuji "adds layers and nuances that set Tatsuo apart from the cinematic elderly crowd, just as his tofu, which we see Tatsuo lovingly make in mouthwatering details, is a cut above the rest." - *Japan Times*, Mark Schilling



OUT アウト

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

**Saturday, April 6 at 7:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)**

Japan | Drama, Action | 2023 | 129 minutes

In Japanese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & SCREENPLAY: Hiroshi Shinagawa

STARRING: Yuki Kura, Koshi Mizukami, Kotaro Daigo, Shosei Ohira, Sho Yonashiro, Sukai Kinjo, Yuki Yoda

FILM SOURCE: KADOKAWA CORPORATION

Released from a juvenile reformatory and taken in by a relative who runs a barbecue restaurant in Chiba, Tatsuya Iguchi begins life with high hopes for rehabilitation. But on his first day of release, he gets into a one-on-one fight with Kaname Abe, the vice president of a motorcycle gang, Kilihito. Tatsuya wins the fight but does not want to go back to the reformatory. Kaname does not want his defeat to be known, and they agree to keep the fight secret, and the two deepen their relationship.

OUT is a Japanese manga series written by Tatsuya Iguchi and drawn by Mizuta Makoto. It has been serialized in Young Champion since 2012 and is currently ongoing. As of June 2023, the series has exceeded a cumulative circulation of 6.5 million copies. The story is based on Tatsuya Iguchi's real experiences as a young delinquent. However, the setting was updated for more modern times, and events were exaggerated for entertainment purposes.



DIRECTOR
Hiroshi Shinagawa



SHANKAR'S FAIRIES

SPECIAL ENCORE

ADMISSION FREE. RSVP REQUIRED.

**Wednesday, April 10 at 5:30 PM at Block Museum of Art (Auditorium)
(40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, IL 60208)**

India | Fiction | 2021 | 93 minutes

In Hindi w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Irfana Majumdar

SCREENWRITER: Nita Kumar

STARRING: Jaihind Kumar, Shreeja Mishra, Gaurav Saini, Irfana Majumdar, Adwik Mathur

FILM SOURCE: Asian Shadow Films

Director Irfana Majumdar is scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and post-film Q&A moderated by Ron Falzone, festival's in-house lecturer

India, 1962. Shankar is the indispensable servant on the estate of the parents of little Anjana and her brother. The little girl loves the brother's fantastical stories and follows him around. Newly independent India is still class bound and exploitative. The mother manages the servants with a tough hand and the father commands his force with authority. Meanwhile, in the village, Shankar's daughter gets sick...

"SHANKAR'S FAIRIES is an absolutely stunning piece of filmmaking, a detailed and beautiful ode to the art of telling stories and the value of learning about the world through these small but significant encounters." - *International Cinephile Society*



DIRECTOR
Irfana Majumdar

at the Block Museum



THE COFFIN PAINTER 异乡来客

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

ADMISSION FREE. RSVP REQUIRED.

Thursday, April 11 at 5:30 PM at Block Museum of Art (Auditorium)
(40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston, IL 60208)

China | Fiction | 2021 | 95 minutes

In Mandarin w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & SCREENWRITER: Da Fei

STARRING: Luosangqunpei, Zimu Zhang, Lu Liu

FILM SOURCE: Midnight Blur Films | Parallax International Sales

Post film discussion led by Ron Falzone, festival's in-house lecturer

In his second feature film, director Da Fei tells a warm story of the cross-generational friendship between two strangers: Jia, an older man who has lost his son, and Seven, a middle school girl who runs from debt with her mother. As a coffin painter, the traditional Chinese craftsman who draws religious symbols on coffins, Jia observes people's different attitudes towards their families living and dead. As time passes, the three characters with distinct personalities drift closer and bring company and warmth to each other. By depicting the mundane daily life in a remote town, Da Fei embodies people's loneliness in an indifferent world. The sincere and gloomy tone of the film drives us to feel the characters' burdens and sorrows. As Jia and Seven understand and heal each other with their kindness, their lives begin to turn around...

"While the majority of the Chinese Mainland films that screen in festivals are rather bleak, both in their main subject and in their overall presentation, with this film, Da Fei tries to tone it down a bit by including some elements of European cinema in his narrative." - *The Asian Movie Pulse*.

at the *Block Museum*



DIRECTOR
Da Fei



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寻她

Good Autumn Mommy

导演 陈仕忠



GOOD AUTUMN, MOMMY 寻她

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Saturday, April 13 at 2:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

China | Drama | 2023 | 107 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & WRITER: Chen Shizhong

STARRING: Shu Qi, White K, Lang Yueting, Zhang Benyu, Tian Niu, Yuan Xiangren

FILM SOURCE: Midnight Blur Films | Parallax International Sales



DIRECTOR
Chen Shizhong

Set in a quiet southern cane village, Fong-tai (played by award-winning actress Shu Qi (舒淇)) is heavily pregnant, and together with her husband and their first daughter, they are waiting in earnest to welcome a new family member. But, when their newborn daughter disappears without a trace, Fong-tai embarks on a transformative journey of awakening to find her family and herself. The film was honored with the Outstanding Artistic Achievement Award at the 25th Shanghai International Film Festival in 2023.

As a prolific actress who successfully transitioned from a model to a film star, Shu Qi has made over 80 films and 5 TV series in 20 years. Shu Qi, who has not starred in a film for four years, has changed her fashionable and beautiful image this time, playing the role of a rural woman in a southern China town, showing another kind of resolute and simple feminist beauty.



THE CORD OF LIFE

MIDWEST PREMIERE

April 8-14, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Inner Mongolia, China | Drama/Family | 2022 | 96 minutes
In Mongolian w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & SCREENWRITER: Qiao Sixue

STARRING: Badma, Yider

FILM SOURCE: Midnight Blur Films | Parallax International Sales

Alus is a Mongolian electronic musician confused about what he wants in life. He also cannot bear to see his mother, who suffers from Alzheimer's, living like a captive in his brother's city apartment. He decides to take her back to the grassland in search of the home for which she yearns. As his mother's condition worsens, Alus tries to prevent her from getting lost by tying his mother to him with a rope. The rope is like an umbilical cord that reconnects him to his mother's thoughts, his hometown and his native culture.

The audience is invited to "travel with the film through the city's electronic music night to the dancing and laughter accompanied by the horsehead violin music on the Mongolian grasslands. The cord that ties son to mother serves as a metaphor that binds the two generations and allows them to revisit the sounds of the past and the scent of the grassland in their memories. The loosening of this cord represents the physical demise of nomadic culture and the new generation's embrace and acceptance of their roots." - *The Asia Society*



DIRECTOR
Qiao Sixue

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THE FALLEN BRIDGE

断·桥

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

April 8-14, 2024 Streaming available for U.S. viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

China | Drama | 2022 | 114 minutes
In Mandarin w/English subtitle

DIRECTOR: Yu Li

STARRING: Sichun Ma, Junkai Wang, Wei Fan

FILM SOURCE: Cheng Cheng Films

A bridge in the busy city of Huangque collapses in broad daylight. From the wreckage, investigators discover a skeleton of a kneeling man and a whistleblowing letter revealing corruption behind this fatally flawed construction. THE FALLEN BRIDGE is director Li Yu's latest and biggest box office hit to date. The crime drama examines the role played by laws in an unevenly developed society, and the emotional struggles and moral dilemmas of victims who go to great lengths for justice.

"THE FALLEN BRIDGE plays like one long exercise in pulling one over on them, a film that subtly touches on the generation gap (high youth unemployment as the economy contracts), the building bubble that their elders contrived to cover up the failings of economic planning and the corruption of the One Party state and those who know how to work that system." - *Movie Nation*.



DIRECTOR
Yu Li

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IT REMAINS

釀魂

U.S. PREMIERE

Friday, April 19 at 7:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Comedy | 2022 | 100 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Kelvin Shum

STARRING: Anson Lo, Summer Chan, Chui-Yi Kwok, Siu Hin Ng, David Chiang, Pak Hon Chu,
 Yiu-Sing Lam, Angela Yuen

FILM SOURCE: WU CULTURE ASIA

Director Kelvin Shum is scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and post-film Q&A.

Four colleagues reunite after the tragic death of a friend and set out to hike on a remote island. On this trip, they come across an ancient evil that exists and stalks them at every turn. The four friends are forced to revisit the past that haunts them.

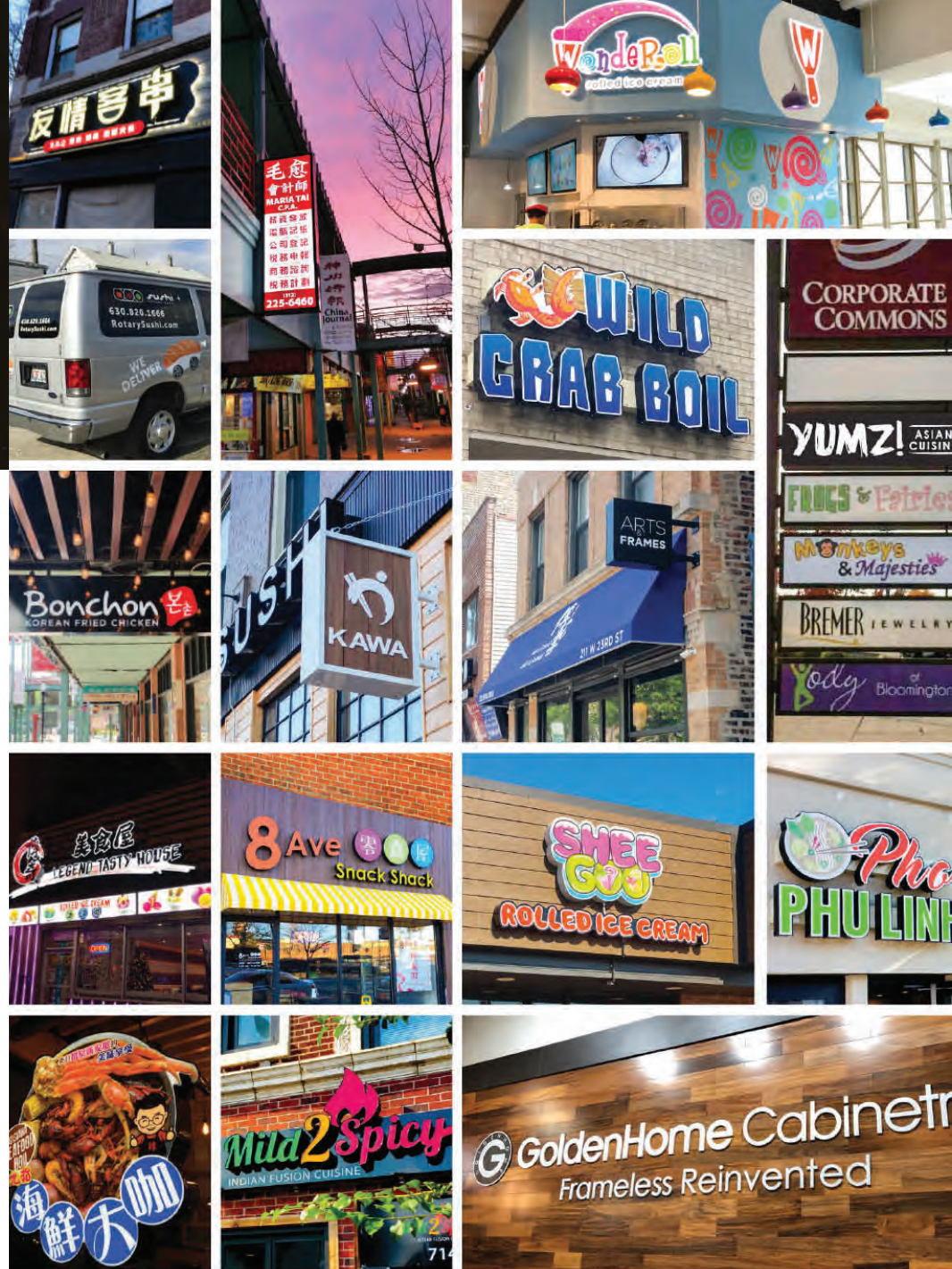
Anson Lo Hon-ting of the popular Cantopop boy band Mirror acquits himself more convincingly in IT REMAINS, playing a guilt-ridden boyfriend trapped in a sinister dreamscape.

APUC has previously shown DELIVERANCE, director Kelvin Shum's first feature that clearly demonstrated his strength at "creating strikingly stylized imagery." With his second feature, "Shum transcends this by creating an atmosphere of sustained spookiness, as well as some of the most beautifully staged images and montages seen in Hong Kong horror cinema in many a long year."

- South China Morning Post



DIRECTOR
Kelvin Shum



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BAND FOUR 4拍4家族

U.S. PREMIERE

Saturday, April 20 at 2:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Drama, Family, Music | 2023 | 107 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Lai Yan Chi

STARRING: Kay Tse, Teddy Robin, Rondi Chan, Anny hisbbuR, Tan Hanjin, Manson Cheung

FILM SOURCE: Entertaining Power Co Ltd.



DIRECTOR
Lai Yan Chi

Director Lai Yan Chi and young talent Rondi Chan are scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and a post-film Q&A.

Cat admired her father King, who left home when she was ten. Years later, they meet again in a crematorium, where Cat is with her nine-year-old son Riley. King is with Cat's half-sister Lok Yin. After a period, the four of them decide to live together. This newly formed family has four different voices, each with their past lives, secrets, and fears. As the once-broken family members begin to set aside their differences and support one another, they will face even greater hardships with Cat's genetic disease.

Directed by the celebrated theater actress and playwright, Mo Lai Yan-chi, "BAND FOUR is an amiable Hong Kong music drama that is far more comfortable coasting on the natural charisma of its fresh-faced performers. Lai's story may be fanciful in multiple ways, but the emotions she evokes with this music-driven film do mostly feel genuine." - *South China Morning Post*

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www.caamuseum.org**



WE ARE FAMILY 出租家人

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Saturday, April 20 at 7:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Comedy | 2022 | 100 minutes

In Cantonese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Benny Lau

SCRIPTWRITERS: Ashley Cheung Yin Kei, Wong Wing Hong, Benny Lau

STARRING: Eric Tsang, Carlos Chan, Catherine Chau, Tien Niu

FILM SOURCE: Emperor Group

Director Ben Lau & actor Carlos Chan are scheduled to appear in-person for a film introduction and a post-film Q&A.

Carlos Chan is the recipient of our BRIGHT STAR AWARD with the award ceremony to be held before the feature presentation.

"Rent -A- Family" specializes in offering family and friends for rent. The company consists of Carlos, the founder; Catherine, the drama coach; and Chi Kwong, the passionate small-time actor. Carlos and Catherine disapprove of Chi Kwong's overwhelming care for their clients, but they begin to rethink the meaning of "Rent-a-Family" when they see the results of Chi Kwong's kindness...



DIRECTOR
Benny Lau



HONG KONG ECONOMIC & TRADE OFFICE
New York



ELEGIES

詩

MIDWEST PREMIERE

Sunday, April 21 at 2:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Documentary | 2023 | 101 minutes

In Cantonese w/English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Ann Hui

FILM SOURCE: GOLDEN SCENE CO. LTD.

Venice Career Golden Lion-winning auteur Ann Hui finally films a topic she holds most dear – poetry as she is always the most literarily inclined of the great directors of her generation, the Hong Kong New Wave. Through her personal encounters with some of Hong Kong's most notable poets, Hui shows the topography of contemporary poetry of the city.

Here is an audience member's review with the penname "smile" who says, "A love letter to Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, comprised of poems that are individual love letters to the same. Interviews with and profiles of the poets contextualize their work and enrich one's understanding of their respective cultures. I know this probably sounds dry and boring, but it's really a quietly beautiful movie."



DIRECTOR
Ann Hui



YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Early China
to LEGO



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TIME STILL TURNS THE PAGE 年少日記

SPECIAL ENCORE

Sunday, April 21 at 5:30 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Drama | 2023 | 95 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR & WRITER: Nick Cheuk

STARRING: Lo Chun Yip, Ronald Cheng, Hanna Chan, Rosa Maria Velasco, Sean Wong

FILM SOURCE: Illume Films

High school teacher Cheng looks back to his repressed childhood memories as he finds an anonymous suicide note in the classroom. He strives hard to prevent another tragedy from happening, while facing a series of family problems: his wife is divorcing him, and his father is dying.

"TIME STILL TURNS THE PAGE" is a poignant tale of emotional torture, regret and redemption told through a student contemplating ending his own life. Writer-director Nick Cheuk's gem of a film is relatively short at 95 minutes, but full of feeling – watch out for the third act's emotional gut punch."

- *South China Morning Post*

The film won the Audience Choice Award and the Best New Director for Nick Cheuk at the 60th Golden Horse Awards. It has now received 12 nominations at the upcoming Hong Kong Film Awards that includes the Best Film, Best New Director, Best Actor, Best Screenplay. Winners will be announced on April 14. The film is a good example of how a new generation of filmmakers in Hong Kong reflect on their city, its land, space, edge and people.



DIRECTOR
Nick Cheuk



ROB AND ROLL 臨時劫案

SPECIAL ENCORE

Sunday, April 21 at 7:00 PM at AMC NEWCITY 14
(1500 N Clybourn Ave, Chicago, IL 60610)

Hong Kong | Action, Crime, Comedy | 2024 | 97 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Albert Mak

STARRING: Aaron Kwok, Lam Ka Tung, Richie Jen, Maggie Cheung Ho Yee, Lam Suet, Nina Paw, Lo Hoi Pang, Nancy Wu Ting Yan, Leung Chun Hang

FILM SOURCE: Niu Vision Media

ROB N ROLL is a Hong Kong action-comedy film produced by Derek Yee and directed by Albert Mak. The film stars Aaron Kwok as a robber who forces two dispirited, middle-aged men, played by Gordon Lam and Richie Jen, to participate in a heist.

"[Director Albert Mak] successfully navigates each character's predicaments and parallel storytelling with a mix of gritty and quirky crime-comedy tones." - *Screen HK*

"An exhilarating, funny and gripping crime thriller." - *NYC Movie Guru*.

"The performances of Aaron Kwok, as an unstable bandit, Lam Ka-tung, as a put-upon taxi driver, and Richie Jen as an indebted business owner, are the draw here." - *South China Morning Post*.



DIRECTOR
Albert Mak



READY O/R KNOT 不日成婚1

SPECIAL ENCORE

April 15-21, 2024 Streaming available for Chicago viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Hong Kong | Comedy | 2023 | 113 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Anselm Chan

STARRING: Carlos Chan, Michelle Wai, Tommy Chu, Hedwig Tam, Kaki Sham,
Renci Yeung

FILM SOURCE: Emperor Group

The story follows Guy and Heidi five years into their relationship and faced with a serious dilemma: whether or not it is time to marry and form a family. They're equally in love, and their relationship is strong. But while Heidi is ready to settle down and believes that marriage is proof of one's everlasting love, Guy holds the belief that marrying Heidi will result in him being tied down to a woman he will one day grow distant from. Heidi consults her girlfriends for advice, and Guy consults the guys. What follows is an outright battle of the sexes, as Heidi plots devious ways of getting pregnant—with marriage as an end goal—as quickly as possible, and Guy schemes up a handful of contraceptive counterstrategies.



DIRECTOR
Anselm Chan

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READY O/R ROT 不日成婚2

SPECIAL ENCORE

April 15-21, 2024 Streaming available for Chicago viewers at
<https://apuc18.eventive.org/welcome>

Hong Kong | Dark Comedy | 2023 | 124 minutes

In Cantonese w/ English subtitles

DIRECTOR: Anselm Chan

STARRING: Carlos Chan, Michelle Wai, Tommy Chu, Rachel Leung

FILM SOURCE: Emperor Group

This sequel to the 2021 film, Ready O/R NOT, that premiered as the closing night film during our Season 12, explores a series of heart-wrenching realities encountered by modern men and women, who are at different stages of their relationships. The story revolves around three couples dealing with accidental pregnancy, unfaithfulness, and the planning of a wedding with a meddling mother-in-law. Will they call it quits or remember why they fell in love in the first place? READY O/R ROT includes much of the cast of the first film and is sure to be a hit with audiences, whether they have seen the first installment or not. Director Chan masterfully combines romance with darkly comedic moments in a twisted exploration of love and commitment.



DIRECTOR
Anselm Chan

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Pre-festival Sneak Peek Screenings

As a lead up to our season 18, Asian Pop-Up Cinema held three fully pre-booked screenings in celebration of Lunar New Year.



THE MONK AND THE GUN,

screened at the Gene Siskel Film Center on Feb 14, is a fable set in Bhutan directed by Pawo Choyning Dorji, whose first feature film in 2019 was nominated for Best International Feature Film. THE MONK AND THE GUN was shortlisted for Best International Feature Film for the upcoming 96th Academy Awards.



100 YARDS,

a stylish Martial Arts movie co-directed by Xu Haofeng and Xu Junfeng, presented in collaboration with the Chicago Film Office, was screened at the Claudia Cassidy Theater at the Chicago Cultural Center on Feb 17, celebrating the Year of the Dragon. A live pre-show Lion Dance was performed by Master P.C. Leung & Team. We thank the generous support from the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Chicago for making this event possible.



PERFECT DAYS,

directed by award-winning Wim Wenders, screened on Feb 24, at AMC River East 21, is a nominee for Best International Feature Film in the upcoming 96th Academy Awards. Koji Yakusho, who was already awarded the Best Actor award in the 76th Cannes Film Festival, played the protagonist Hirayama, who is content with his life as a public toilet cleaner in Tokyo.



We wish continued success to
Asian Pop-Up Cinema
 in its efforts to foster understanding and
 familiarity of diverse Asian cultures.

masuda funai

www.masudafunai.com

Ticketing Information

FILMS PRESENTED ONSITE AT THE FOLLOWING VENUES

- AMC NEWCITY 14 (1500 N CLYBOURN AVE, CHICAGO, IL)
- BLOCK MUSEUM OF ART'S AUDITORIUM (40 ARTS CIRCLE DRIVE, EVANSTON, IL)
- ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE CHICAGO (810 N. DEARBORN ST, CHICAGO, IL)

FILMS ONLY TICKETS ARE \$0.00 TO \$10 (GENERAL ADMISSION)

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SOPHIA'S CHOICE

About Sophia's Choice

Founded by the international film and cultural curator Sophia Wong Boccio, SOPHIA'S CHOICE (蘇菲亞的精選) is a Chicago-based 501 C(3) not-for-profit cultural organization incorporated in May 2015. Our vision is to foster an appreciation for diverse Asian cultures. We realize our vision through a multi-pronged mission to:

- Cultivate an interest in and understanding of Asian cultures via a diverse offering of Asian films.
- Connect the Asian film industry with local Chicago film students, educators and professionals.
- Promote Chicago as a destination for international visitors.

Presented by Sophia's Choice, Asian Pop-Up Cinema (亞洲躍動電影節) (APUC), was a bi-annual film festival since end of last year, is going to be an annual Asian film festival taking place once in the spring of the year. Besides specially curated Asian films in their original languages with English subtitles, starting 2025, the festival will become a competition film festival and accept entries from the Asian American filmmakers' works.

Since APUC's inaugural season in the fall of 2015 through Season 17 in 2023, the festival has premiered close to 350 screenings of contemporary Asian films from Afghanistan, mainland China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. All the films were shown in their original languages with English subtitles. With each film shown once only, selected film and its filmmaker receive their own spotlight, resulting in a more meaningful dialogue with the audience and the media.

This year (2024) will see us continuing with our hybrid offers with films shown physically in the theaters as well as online supported by a customized "virtual cinema". The APUC Virtual Cinema, powered by eventive.org will be serving our newly acquired national home viewers since the pandemic; with a long-term commitment to keep our Asian film communities engaged during the festival. It is also our objective to create more one-off screening events on a year-round basis when good quality films coming through Chicago that we don't want you to miss! Please stay tuned.



Board of Directors had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Aaron Kwok during his attendance in Season 16.

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TEAM APUC

TEAM APUC is part of the incredible driving force behind the successful planning and implementation of our hybrid festival each season. With many returning members, each season we welcome new members onboarding.

BRAVOS TEAM APUC AND TO ALL OUR DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS.

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Japan Program Advisor

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Prof. Ron Falzone
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