

Asian Film Festival 2007: Southeast Asian Popular Cinema

November 9-10, 2007



Friday, November 9

Love for Share (Berbagi Suami),
Indonesia, 2006

Directed by Nia Dinata, 7:00 pm, 120 min in Bahasa Indonesian

Suppressed in previous decades, polygamy is on the rise in Indonesia and is a hot social issue. Director Dinata brings nuance to three very different stories of polygamy: Salma, a Muslim gynecologist, tries to live in denial as her politician husband takes multiple wives; after moving in with her uncle, his two wives, and their children in metropolitan Jakarta, village girl Siti realizes that he intends her to be his third wife; and Ming, a Chinese-Indonesian waitress and aspiring actress whose beauty draws the admiration of customers as well as her married boss.

Citizen Dog (Mah Nakorn),
Thailand, 2004

Directed by Wisit Sasanatieng, 9:45pm, 100 min., in Thai

This quirky comedy follows country boy Pod as he tries to make his way in Bangkok. He loses his finger, finds someone else's, befriends a singing zombie, becomes a taxi driver for a foul-mouthed little girl with a whiskey-drinking teddy bear, and meets his grandmother reincarnated as a gecko. Along the way he encounters the love of his life in Jin, an office maid obsessed with recycling plastic bottles. Hyper-saturated, kaleidoscopic colors punch up the visuals, while Thai indie rock bands and choruses of passers-by provide the catchy soundtrack. Sasanatieng's second film delivers sly social commentary with unique, surrealistic style.

Educator Workshop:

Saturday, November 10, 9:00 am

Teaching the Cambodian Genocide with Documentary Film
Judy Ledgerwood, Anthropology, Northern Illinois University

Out of the Poison Tree Documentary Film Screening 1:00 pm
To register and for more information, see www.aems.uiuc.edu

Free and Open to the Public

All films subtitled in English

Boardman's Art Theatre
126 W. Church Street
Champaign, Illinois

For more information, including trailers, see www.aems.uiuc.edu

Saturday, November 10

Milan, Philippines, 2004

**Directed by Olivia M. Lamasan, 2:30 pm,
135 min., in Tagalog, Italian and English**

Lino leaves the Philippines when he realizes that his wife, working illegally in Italy, has gone missing. Arriving in Milan, he meets Jenny, who shows him the ropes. Self-assured and ambitious, Jenny is the anchor of the local community of Filipino migrant workers, whose goals and dreams – and ties to the Philippines – shift the longer they stay. Interspersed documentary-like interviews with migrant workers in Italy reveal the harsh realities and ambiguities of their situation. At the same time, Filipino pop idols Piolo Pascual and Claudine Barretto in the leads add glamour to the film, as the camera sweeps through Italy's luscious scenery.

Sepet, Malaysia, 2005

**Directed by Yasmin Ahmad, 6:00 pm, 102 min.,
in Malay, Hokkien, Cantonese, and English**

When Jason meets Orked at the street market where he sells pirated videos for a living, their attraction is immediate. The two come from different social worlds – she is middle class, Muslim, Malay, headed for academic success and an overseas scholarship; he is ethnically Chinese, working class, entangled in gang politics – but none of that matters as they fall deeply in love. Ahmad's second in a series of films about the character Orked makes a plea for tolerance as it exposes some of the tensions and inequalities in multi-ethnic Malaysian society in this moving story of intense first love.

Singapore Dreaming (Mei Man Ren Sheng),
Singapore, 2006

**Directed by Colin Goh and Yen Yen Woo, 8:30 pm, 105 min.,
in Mandarin, Hokkien, and Cantonese Chinese and English**

"The 5Cs" – cash, credit card, car, condo and country club – are the stuff of Loh Poh Huat's dreams, but his salary as a lawyer's clerk will hardly suffice. The entire Loh family face frustration and dissatisfaction as they try to "make it" Singapore style. When Poh Huat wins the lottery, it seems their problems are solved, but it's a mixed blessing. In the end, everyone must re-evaluate their goals in life. Singapore Dreaming is a poignant yet darkly humorous story about a typical Singaporean family dealing with loss, ambition and the search for what really matters in life.

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