

From arthouse masters to daring contemporary filmmakers

BFI's A CENTURY OF CHINESE CINEMA
in partnership with **TIFF**
continues from August to October 2014 at BFI Southbank

August to October Programme Highlights

- Fourth Generation filmmaker **Xie Fei** in Conversation – **13 & 14 August**
- Hong Kong New Wave pioneer **Ann Hui** in Conversation – **24 August**
 - **New Waves:** Fifth Generation masters
- **New Directions:** Sixth Generation & Hong Kong Second Wave
 - **BFI Film Audience Network (BFI FAN)** Chinese cinema programme



London, July 2014

The BFI's landmark **A Century of Chinese Cinema** season, programmed in partnership with **TIFF**, with the generous support of our season sponsors **Lycamobile** and **Shangri-La** and with special thanks to **Cathay Pacific Airways**, continues its unprecedented exploration of classics and rarely-seen gems of Chinese cinema from August to October at BFI Southbank.

The **New Waves** programme in August showcases films made from 1980 to 1994 when Chinese cinema dominated the international arthouse scene. After the ravages of the Cultural Revolution, the Mainland's Fourth and Fifth Generation of Chinese auteurs such as **Xie Fei**, **Wu Tianming**, **Chen Kaige**, **Zhang Yimou** and **Tian Zhuangzhuang** emerged at the same time as Hong Kong's New Wave filmmakers like **Ann Hui** and the new generation of Taiwanese masters led by **Hou Hsiao-hsien** and **Edward Yang**.

The **New Directions** programme from September to 7 October celebrates the sexy, provocative and daring work made by acclaimed contemporary filmmakers such as **Wong Kar-wai**, **Jia Zhangke**, **Wang Xiaoshuai** and **Tsai Ming-liang**. These directors built on the innovations of the New Wave era and sparked a renewed global interest in Chinese cinema into the new millennium.

As part of the **BFI Film Audience Network (BFI FAN)**, there will be A Century of Chinese Cinema programme showing films supplied by the BFI and China Print Archive at selected UK venues from July to October. Participating venues include [Watershed Bristol](#) (July), [Glasgow Film Theatre](#) (July

and August), [Showroom Sheffield](#) and [Chapter Cardiff](#) (both in September), and [Queens Film Theatre Belfast](#) (October).

Programme highlights of the last three months at **BFI Southbank** include:

New Waves – August 2014

Part four of **A Century of Chinese Cinema** looks at how a new generation of arthouse masters from the Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan emerged from the shadows of the Cultural Revolution to inspire audiences worldwide. From the late 1970s onwards, the Fourth Generation filmmakers sought for ways to express the ordeal that had been inflicted upon their country over the past decade from 1966-76. The result was the so-called ‘scar films’ – simple, affecting dramas pioneered by such filmmakers as **Xei Fei** and **Wu Tianming**. BFI Southbank is delighted to welcome acclaimed Fourth Generation filmmaker **Xei Fei**, currently a Professor at Beijing Film Academy, to give a talk on 13 August, and to take part in two Q&A events to accompany screenings of his films, **Black Snow** (China, 1990) on 13 August and **Women from the Lake of Scented Souls** (China, 1993) on 14 August.

Though not well known in the West, Fourth Generation filmmaker **Wu Tianming** directed several important features including his most celebrated film, **The Old Well** (China, 1986) that would help reshape Chinese cinema. As the head of the Xi'an Film Studio, he was known as the ‘Godfather of the Fifth Generation’ and mentored the burgeoning careers of the now-legendary Fifth Generation filmmakers such as **Zhang Yimou** and **Chen Kaige** who graduated from the Beijing Film Academy in 1982, along with **Tian Zhuangzhuang**, **Zhang Junzhao** and others.

The films of the Fifth Generation directors came to represent a new approach to filmmaking in China. Already a renowned cinematographer, **Zhang Yimou** announced himself as a master director with **Red Sorghum** (China, 1987) and **The Story of Qiu Ju** (China 1992). Both films starred Zhang’s muse **Gong Li** and established her reputation as one of the world’s most gifted film actresses. Together with Zhang Yimou, **Chen Kaige’s** remarkably assured debut **Yellow Earth** (China, 1984) was a true milestone that helped propel China to the top ranks of global cinema. While Chen’s most famous film in the West, **Farewell My Concubine** (Hong Kong-China 1993), a melodrama about life backstage at the famed Peking Opera spanned a half-century of modern Chinese history and came to define the Chinese epic.

Key filmmakers in the Hong Kong New Wave are director **Ann Hui** whose film, **Boat People** (Hong Kong, 1982) is considered one of the best Hong Kong films of all time, and is the last film in Hui’s “Vietnam trilogy” recounting the plight of Vietnamese refugees after the communist takeover following the Fall of Saigon. BFI Southbank is pleased to welcome Ann Hui for a Q&A following the screening of her captivating and light-heartedly funny film, **A Simple Life** (Hong Kong, 2011) on 24 August.

The leading figures of the Taiwanese New Wave were **Edward Yang** and **Hou Hsiao-hsien** who together put Taiwanese cinema on the international map with work that explored the island’s rapidly changing present as well as its turbulent, often bloody past. Yang’s **The Terroriser** (Taiwan, 1986) is a complex multi-narrative urban thriller that reflected the pressures and uncertainties of city life, while **A Brighter Summer Day** (Taiwan, 1991) inspired by a real-life 1960s murder case ranks alongside Hou Hsiao-hsien’s **A City of Sadness** (Taiwan, 1989) as the crowning achievement of the Taiwanese New Wave. By the 1980s, Hou was recognised internationally for his style, often compared to Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu, with films such as **The Time to Live and the Time to Die** (Taiwan, 1985), and **Dust in the Wind** (Taiwan, 1987).

New Directions – September to 7 October 2014

The fifth and final part of **A Century of Chinese Cinema** showcases a series of sexy, exciting and daring films made from 1993 to 2006 by acclaimed filmmakers such as Sixth Generation auteurs **Jia Zhangke** and **Wang Xiaoshuai**, Hong Kong Second Wave directors **Wong Kar-wai** and **Stanley Kwan**, and Taiwan's Second New Wave filmmakers such as **Tsai Ming-liang**.

The films by the Mainland's Sixth Generation directors **Jia Zhangke** and **Wang Xiaoshuai** reflect on marginalised individuals in contemporary urban and provincial life, and the negative impact of China's socio-economic changes. Wang's debut feature **The Days** (Mainland, 1993) is an incisive portrait of two bohemian artists drifting through life in 1980s Beijing, while Jia's **Platform** (Mainland, 2000) chronicles a group of twenty-something performers who make the transition from a state-run folk music troupe to a private outfit performing disco and punk rock routines. Jia's minimalist masterpiece **Still Life** (Mainland, 2006) tells two stories of a man and a woman searching for their absent spouses set adrift in a world they no longer recognise against the backdrop of the controversial Three Gorge Dam construction. Considered one of the most talented directors of China's post-Sixth generation is **Lu Chuan** whose films, **The Missing Gun** (Mainland, 2002) and **Kekexili: Mountain Patrol** (Mainland, 2004) brought a brash new energy to contemporary Chinese cinema.

The **Second Wave** that appeared in the late 1980s in **Hong Kong** – led by **Wong Kar-wai** and **Stanley Kwan** – created lush, highly stylised films that introduced a powerful new aesthetic to international cinema. Wong's offbeat, post-modern **Chungking Express** (Hong Kong, 1994) with its depiction of urban loneliness and unrequited love is a signature film of millennial cinema. **Happy Together** (Wong Kar-wai, Hong Kong, 1997) – showing as a special **BFI Flare Presents** screening on 8 September – is a melancholic tale of a doomed gay love affair in Buenos Aires. His sublime masterpiece of romantic longing, **In the Mood for Love** (Hong Kong 2000) starring **Maggie Cheung** and **Tony Leung** is a love letter to much of Chinese cinema history. Maggie Cheung stars as the legendary 1930s Chinese cinema icon Ruan Lingyu in Stanley Kwan's innovative part-biopic, part-documentary **Center Stage** (Hong Kong, 1992), and affirmed her status as one of the most celebrated Chinese actresses of recent years.

The Chinese Malaysian director **Tsai Ming-liang** is one of the leading filmmakers of the **Taiwanese Second New Wave** along with earlier contemporaries Hou Hsiao-hsien and Edward Yang, and is a major exponent of 'a Cinema of Slowness'. His astonishing second feature **Vive L'Amour** (Taiwan, 1994) is a prime example of cinematic slowness with sparse dialogue following the interactions of three rootless urban drifters in a densely-populated Taipei.

– Ends –

www.bfi.org.uk/china

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FILM AND EVENT LISTINGS

AUGUST 2014

August events

Riding the New Waves

In this illustrated talk, Jinhee Choi (King's College London) introduces us to a hugely fertile period in Chinese cinema, in which creativity and originality thrived in the face of political and generational conflict. While drawing attention to artistic high points of the Taiwanese and Hong Kong New Waves and the Mainland Fourth and Fifth Generation directors, Choi explains the political and cultural context for this explosion of cinematic innovation. An essential introduction to an incredible body of films.

Tickets £6.50

Fri 8 Aug 18:10 NFT3

New Wave: Film screenings

***The Spooky Bunch* (Zhuang Dao Zheng) Hong Kong 1980. Dir Ann Hui. With Josephine Siao, Kenny Bee, Tina Lui. 93min. Cantonese with EST**

Virtually unclassifiable, this horror comedy oscillates between slapstick and political drama. A Cantonese opera troupe is lured to a remote island by the wealthy Mr Ma, who wants his nephew to marry player Ah Chi and lift a curse on his family. As the troupe rehearses, it's assailed by murderous ghosts – kooky dances and gruesome murders follow. Hui fuses the traditions of Cantonese opera with contemporary Hong Kong popular film in this delightful and complex genre experiment.

Wed 06 Aug 18:10 NFT3

Thu 07 Aug 20:40 NFT2

***Boat People* (Touben Nuhai) Hong Kong 1982. Dir Ann Hui. With George Lam, Cora Miao, Season Ma, Andy Lau. 105min. Cantonese, Japanese, Vietnamese with EST**

Having mixed documentary and fiction in her work for television, Ann Hui, great humanist of the Hong Kong New Wave, received great acclaim for *Boat People*, frequently named as the best Hong Kong film of all time. Returning to Vietnam three years after documenting its liberation by Ho Chi Minh's Communist forces, a Japanese photojournalist encounters a country in a state of fear and paranoia. Brutal, beautiful and moving, *Boat People* has the immediacy of a news broadcast and a poetry born of despair.

Tue 5 Aug 18:10 NFT2

Wed 6 Aug 20:30 NFT3

***A Simple Life* + Q&A with Ann Hui**

Hong Kong 2011. Dir Ann Hui. With Deanie Ip, Andy Lau. Cantonese with EST. 113min. PG

Ah Tao has worked as a servant for the Leung family since her teenage years, finally coming to care for film production accountant Roger (Andy Lau - *Infernal Affairs*, *House of Flying Daggers*). After Ah Tao has a stroke and is hospitalised, she asks Roger to tell his mother she's retiring, and to arrange a place in an old people's home. As Roger visits her there, he begins to know the woman who has raised him and becomes her friend. A captivating and light-heartedly funny film based on a true story.

Sun 24 Aug 13:00 NFT2

***One and Eight* (Yi Ge he Ba Ge) China 1983. Dir Zhang Junzhao. With Tao Zeru, Chen Daoming, Lu Xiaoyan. 90min. Mandarin with EST**

One and the Eight is widely considered the first feature of the Mainland's Fifth Generation. During the Sino-Japanese War, a commissar serving with an army unit in northeast China is suspected of treason and thrown into prison with eight criminals. When the unit comes under attack, he demonstrates his loyalty by rallying his fellow prisoners to join in a rear guard action. Featuring bleached, high contrast cinematography by Zhang Yimou and some remarkably stylised passages, the film feels like the start of a new cinematic revolution.

Fri 01 Aug 20:40 NFT2

Sun 03 Aug 18:20 NFT2

Yellow Earth (Huang Tudi) China 1984. Dir Chen Kaige. With Xue Bai, Wang Xueji, Tan Tuo. 89min. Mandarin with EST

Chen's strikingly beautiful debut announced a new approach to filmmaking in China. With Zhang Yimou, then a cinematographer, he made eloquent use of the harsh landscapes of northern China to create a story about a Communist soldier who arrives in a rural village to research traditional folk songs. The widower he lodges with barely speaks, but his teenage daughter, soon to be married off, is intrigued by the talk of equality and freedom... The elliptical, resonant narrative shows the way forward to thrilling effect.

Sat 23 Aug 18:10 NFT3

Sun 24 Aug 20:45 NFT1

Sacrificed Youth (Qingchun Ji) China 1985. Dir Zhang Nuanxin. With Li Fengxu, Feng Yuanzheng, Song Tao. 92min. Mandarin with EST

Gender equity programmes after 1949 saw the emergence of influential female voices in Chinese cinema, most famously Zhang Nuanxin. A teenage girl is transported to a mountainous and remote region during the Cultural Revolution. The daughter of urban intellectuals, she's initially shocked by the locals' sensuality but then begins to share in their uninhibited ways... Zhang's use of landscape is breathtaking, and she displays an ethnographic, empathetic filmmaking style.

35mm archival print courtesy of the USC Hugh M Hefner Moving Image Archive

Sat 2 Aug 18:20 NFT2

Tue 5 Aug 20:30 NFT3

The Black Cannon Incident (Heipao Shijian) China 1985. Dir Huang Jianxin. With Liu Zifeng, Gerhard Olschewski, Gao Ming. 94min. Mandarin with EST

This satire depicts the clash between the rising class of industrial modernisers and old Party cadres. It chronicles the Kafkaesque predicament of a bumbling factory translator suspected of industrial espionage after he sends an innocent telegram relating to the missing chess piece – 'black cannon' – he's trying to locate. Reassigned to a less sensitive department but never informed of the reason for his demotion, he petitions to get his job back, sparking a series of Party meetings set in a boardroom that's pure German Expressionism.

Sat 09 Aug 18:30 NFT3

Mon 11 Aug 20:30 NFT3

The Time to Live and the Time to Die (Tongnian Wangshi) Taiwan 1985. Dir Hou Hsiao-hsien. With You Anshun, Tian Feng, Mei Fang. 138min. Mandarin, Hakka with EST

Hou's first masterpiece was this semi-autobiographical drama about a family who settle in Taiwan in 1947. The story focuses on young Ah-ha, who knows only his family's adopted home in a village; his grandmother, exhausted by a lifetime of suffering under feudal rule civil war, who now takes refuge in fantasies of the home she left behind; and his father, with one foot in each place. Hou's measured tone, impeccable compositions and use of deep focus announced him to the world as a major new artist.

Sat 09 Aug 15:30 NFT3

Fri 15 Aug 20:20 NFT3

The Horse Thief (Daoma Zei) China 1986. Dir Tian Zhuangzhuang. With Tseshang Rigzin, Dan Jiji, Jayang Jamco. 88min. Mandarin with EST

This oblique, ravishing epic was praised by Martin Scorsese as the best film he saw in the 1990s. Tian had been sent to the remote countryside during the Cultural Revolution, which eventually led to this portrait of life in Tibet. Structured around a series of Buddhist ceremonies, it tells of a horse thief's struggles to support his family and give up his larcenous ways in contrition for his son's death. *The Horse Thief* is a fascinating glimpse into the seemingly timeless existence of the people of a politically-sensitive land.

Sat 09 Aug 20:30 NFT3

Mon 11 Aug 18:10 NFT3

The Terrorisers (Kongbufenzi) Taiwan 1986. Dir Edward Yang. With Li Liquan, Cora Miao, Wang An, Jin Shijie. 109min. Mandarin, Min Nan with EST

The Terroriser was praised by critics as one of the radical works of the Taiwanese New Wave. Edward Yang deftly weaves together a number of seemingly disconnected narrative strands and characters – a Mainland doctor and his self-absorbed wife, petty street hoodlums and their female compatriot, a photographer who

wanders the streets quietly observing the life around him – to create a lacerating vision of a rapidly globalising Taipei.

Sun 17 Aug 18:10 NFT3

Sat 23 Aug 16:00 NFT3

The Old Well (Lao Jing) China 1986. Dir Wu Tianming. With Zhang Yimou, Liang Yujin, Xie Yan. 130min. Mandarin with EST

After the Cultural Revolution, Wu made several films that helped reshape Chinese cinema. Initially, *Old Well* feels like a Fifth Generation film with its vast landscapes, hardy peasants and symbolism, as a young man returns from his urban education determined to better his hometown. When he and his former girlfriend get trapped inside a well, however, it begins to feel far more like a Fourth Generation ‘scar film.’

35mm archival print courtesy of the USC Hugh M Hefner Moving Image Archive

Mon 18 Aug 20:40 NFT2

Fri 22 Aug 18:30 NFT2

Dust in the Wind (Lianlian Feng Chen) Taiwan 1987. Dir Hou Hsiao-hsien. With Wang Ching-Wen, Hsin Hsu-Fen, Li Tianlu. 109min. 15. Mandarin, Cantonese, Min Nan with EST

Dust in the Wind is a characteristically subtle, sensitive film from Hou, centred on a teenager and his girlfriend who move from a small mining town to Taipei, only to find their marriage plans threatened by city life and military service. Deftly observed, immaculately composed and blessed with Hou’s eloquent sense of landscape, the film speaks volumes about Taiwan’s relationship to the Mainland, and looks forward to his later historical dramas.

Wed 20 Aug 20:40 NFT2

Fri 22 Aug 20:45 NFT3

Red Sorghum (Hong Gaoliang) China 1987. Dir Zhang Yimou. With Gong Li, Jiang Wen, Teng Rujun. 95min. Mandarin, Japanese with EST

Already a renowned cinematographer, Zhang Yimou announced himself as a master director with this deceptively simple folk fable. *Red Sorghum* tells the story of young peasant girl Jiu’er (Gong Li, Zhang’s muse), whose parents sell her into marriage with an elderly winemaker. Attacked by bandits on the way to her wedding, she is rescued by one of her palanquin bearers (Jiang Wen, sporting maximum swagger), who later becomes her lover. From its bawdy beginnings to its tragic conclusion, *Red Sorghum* is a formidable visual accomplishment.

Sat 16 Aug 18:40 NFT1

Tue 19 Aug 20:45 NFT1

King of the Children (Haizi Wang) China 1987. Dir Chen Kaige. With Xie Yuan, Yang Xuewen, Chen Shaohua. 107min. Mandarin with EST

An urban exile is assigned to teach children in a remote village during the Cultural Revolution. He finds a one-room, open-air schoolhouse, no textbooks, and a bunch of rowdy kids. Encouraging his students to imagine a different life for themselves, he becomes their hero – until the local authorities get wind of his ‘subversive’ teachings. *King of the Children*, an ambitious experiment in allegorical storytelling, is a clever blend of magic and realism.

35mm archival print courtesy of the USC Hugh M Hefner Moving Image Archive

Thu 21 Aug 20:45 NFT1

Sun 24 Aug 18:30 NFT1

A City of Sadness (Beiqing Chengshi) Taiwan 1989. Dir Hou Hsiao-Hsien. With Tony Leung, Xin Shufen, Li Tianlu, Jack Kao. 160min. Mandarin, Min Nan, Japanese, Cantonese with EST

By the late 1980s, Hou was recognised internationally for his style – sparse dialogue, lingering shots, precise compositions and deep focus – and for specific but resonant stories of conflict and change. Here he takes on the ‘White Terror’ from 1945 to 1950, when Taiwan became host to the Nationalist Chinese government-in-exile as they fled from Mao’s Communists. Focusing on four brothers, Hou keeps historical events off-screen while showing the tragic ruptures they create within one family.

Thu 21 Aug 17:50 NFT3

Sun 24 Aug 15:20 NFT1

Black Snow + Q&A with Xie Fei*

(Ben Ming Nian) China 1990. Dir Xie Fei. With Jiang Wen, Lin Cheng, Cai Hongxiang. 107min. Mandarin with EST

Xie Fei, the acknowledged leader of the Fourth Generation filmmakers, helped pioneer the 'scar film' tradition, but it's *Black Snow* that marks him as a key figure in the evolution of Chinese cinema. Jiang Wen, combining macho brutality with puppy-dog eyes, stars as a petty criminal – a protagonist never seen in Chinese films of the time – who returns to Beijing at the onset of the Mainland's entry into the global capitalist market and falls for a cabaret singer. *Black Snow* paved the way for Sixth Generation luminaries Lou Ye and Jia Zhangke in its portrayal of new China at its most contradictory.

Wed 13 Aug 20:30 NFT3*

Thu 14 Aug 18:10 NFT3

Brighter Summer Day (Guling Jie Shaonian Sha Ren Shijian) Taiwan 1991. Dir Edward Yang. With Zhang Zhen, Zhang Guozhu, Elaine Jin, Lisa Yang. 237min. Mandarin, Min Nan, Shanghainese with EST

Edward Yang's novelistic epic was inspired by a real-life 1960s murder case, and ranks alongside Hou Hsiao-hsien's *A City of Sadness* as the crowning achievement of the Taiwanese New Wave. *Brighter Summer Day* – the title is taken from Elvis Presley lyrics – focuses on Xiao Si'r (Chang Chen), an intelligent but underachieving high school student who falls in with a local street gang. When Si'r falls for Ming (Lisa Yang), the girlfriend of imprisoned gang leader Cat (Wong Chizan), her seemingly innate inconstancy pushes him further and further into an unhealthy obsession. Yang ingeniously uses his small-scale story to create a portrait of a whole society gripped by a perpetual identity crisis: the elder generation being attached to the war-ridden Mainland they forsook for a Taiwan now under the repressive thumb of the Nationalists; the younger generation knowing nothing but their island home and resentfully reacting against their parents' nostalgia with aimless, no-future nihilism.

Mon 25 Aug 18:30 NFT1

Fri 29 Aug 18:30 NFT1

Bloody Morning (Xuese Qingchen) China 1992. Dir Li Shaohong. With Hu Yajie, Kpng Lin, Zhao Jun. 100min. Mandarin with EST

Unavailable for many years and barely known, *Bloody Morning* is now considered one of the greatest Fifth Generation films. Freely adapted from Gabriel García Márquez's '*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*,' the film follows the investigation of a teacher's murder in a small and desperately poor rural village, with the story gradually pieced together from the fragmented memories of witnesses. Li has a remarkable eye and a fascination with small-town life, and introduces an innovative storytelling structure that remains unprecedented in Chinese cinema.

35mm archival print courtesy of the USC Hugh M Hefner Moving Image Archive

Tue 26 Aug 20:45 NFT3

Sat 30 Aug 16:10 NFT2

The Story of Qiu Ju (Qiu Ju Da Guansi) China 1992. Dir Zhang Yimou. With Gong Li, Lei Laosheng, Ge Zhijun. 110min. Mandarin with EST

Following a series of lavish and internationally acclaimed historical dramas, Zhang Yimou struck out in a radically different direction with this bracing, unforgettable foray into contemporary neorealism. Zhang's muse Gong Li plays the pregnant wife of a peasant farmer who is badly beaten (complete with a vicious kick to the balls) by the village chief. Against her husband's wishes, Qiu Ju complains to the local policeman, who fines the chief and asks him to apologise. Unrepentant, the chief throws the money at Qiu Ju and stomps off without an apology. The indignant Qiu Ju continues to appeal her husband's case to ever higher authorities in ever bigger cities, until her out-of-control crusade collapses when she goes into labour and receives help from an unexpected source. *The Story of Qiu Ju* provides a fascinating glimpse into China's massive, late-century urban migrations and slowly recalibrating justice system as it traces its heroine's quest from city to city. The film won the Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival and confirmed Gong Li as one of the world's most gifted film actresses.

Thu 28 Aug 18:20 NFT2

Sat 30 Aug 20:45 NFT1

Women from the Lake of Scented Souls + Q&A with Xie Fei*

(Xiang Hun Nü) China 1993. Dir Xie Fei. With Siqin Gaowa, Wu Yujuan, Lei Luosheng. 105min. Mandarin with EST

Sold as a child bride to a crippled husband, Sister Xiang (Siqin Gaowa) rises to become a successful entrepreneur and the richest person in her village. In a regressively feudal manoeuvre, she uses her wealth to purchase a bride for her mentally challenged son, and rules over her unwilling daughter-in-law with an iron hand. But as surprising revelations emerge, Sister Xiang finds herself transitioning from the young girl's oppressor to her fellow victim.

Thu 14 Aug 20:30 NFT3*

Fri 15 Aug 18:10 NFT3

The Blue Kite (Lanse Fengzheng) China 1993. Dir Tian Zhuangzhuang. With Yi Tian, Zhang Wenyao, Lü Liping. 140min. Mandarin with EST

Tian Zhuangzhuang's lyrical, deeply-moving film focuses on a young boy named Tietou who, from his vantage point in a traditional hutong courtyard in Beijing, witnesses the terrible human cost of three enormous historical ruptures – the Anti-Rightist Movement, the Great Leap Forward, and the Cultural Revolution – as he grows into a man. Tian, a formidable visual stylist, employs a distinct colour palette for each of The Blue Kite's three chapters, and creates a feeling of almost universal sorrow without ever leaving its beautifully intimate register.

Thu 28 Aug 20:20 NFT1

Sun 31 Aug 17:50 NFT1

A Borrowed Life (Duo-sang) Taiwan 1994. Dir Wu Nien-jen. With Tsai Chen-Nan, Tsai Chiou-Feng, Fu Jun. 167min. Mandarin, Min Nan, Japanese with EST

Wu Nien-jen, best known as the star of Edward Yang's Yi Yi, was the screenwriter for many of Taiwanese cinema's greatest films, including *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* and *A City of Sadness*. *A Borrowed Life*, an epic, finely detailed study of a coal mining family, is one of the few films Wu directed himself. *A Borrowed Life* proved to be politically incendiary in its depiction of how conflicting loyalties in the Sino-Japanese War puts a father-son relationship to the test.

Wed 27 Aug 19:50 NFT2

Sun 31 Aug 15:00 NFT3

Farewell My Concubine (Ba Wang Bie Ji) Hong Kong-China 1993. Dir Chen Kaige. With Leslie Cheung, Zhang Fengyi, Gong Li, Ge You. 171min. 15. Mandarin with EST

One of the great Chinese films, *Farewell My Concubine* has come to define the Chinese epic – bold colours, exquisite compositions, decades of history told through emblematic characters, and resonant cultural signifiers, all with a garnish of political and sexual scandal. It also introduced Leslie Cheung, one of the most important screen actors of the last century. Cheung plays Dieyi, an opera performer who as a youth is brutalised into accepting his fate as a boy turned into a girl in order to play female roles on stage.

Sat 23 Aug 20:00 NFT1

Mon 25 Aug 15:20 NFT1

SEPTEMBER to 7 OCTOBER 2014

September & October events

Charting Chinese Cinema's New Directions

In this illustrated talk, Chris Berry (King's College London) will argue that Chinese-language cinema is in the midst of a massive transformation, with a booming commercial cinema of the People's Republic eclipsing the type of filmmaking associated with the New Waves of the 1980s. Are we, he asks, witnessing the end of regional filmmaking, and the birth of a new, unified cinematic megapower with global ambitions? Welcome to Chollywood? In what ways can independent filmmaking, in all three territories, offer alternative discourses? Join us to find out.

Mon 1 Sept 18:30 NFT3

A Time Traveller's Guide to China *With live piano accompaniment. TRT c.80min*

Take a trip as far back as the days of the late Qing dynasty in imperial China with this programme of rarely-seen films from pioneers, missionaries and holidaymakers, plus travelogues and newsreels compiled before WWII. See bustling and cosmopolitan Shanghai in 1901, visit imperial Beijing in 1910, and cruise the picturesque canals of Zhujiajiao in 1925 on this odyssey of the exotic and the everyday.

Introduced by BFI Archive Curator Edward Anderson

Tue 2 Sept 18:20 NFT2

Key Scholars in Film Studies: Song Hwee Lim on Tsai Ming-liang and a Cinema of Slowness

In the latest in this series of lectures featuring the world's best film scholars, we welcome Song Hwee Lim (The Chinese University of Hong Kong), who will explore the relationship between cinematic slowness – increasingly prevalent in global arthouse cinema – and a wider sociocultural 'slow movement.' Song Hwee Lim will analyse aspects of stillness and silence in cinema, focusing in particular on Tsai Ming-liang's *Vive L'Amour* (1994) and his video work.

Thu 2 Oct 18:10 NFT3

Presented in partnership with:



BFI Flare Presents: A Brief History of Queer Chinese Cinema

Ahead of our screening of Wong Kar Wai's *Happy Together*, Victor Fan (King's College London) charts the history of LGBT film in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, from the queer artistic communities of the Shanghai Golden Age through to outright queer provocations of recent Chinese independent film. Fan will also reflect on the current state of queer filmmaking in China in the context of its domestic reception, as well as its presence on the global art cinema and festival circuits.

Mon 8 Sept 18:30

BFI Reuben Library

UK Premiere: Dream of Red Mansions

China 2013. Dir Gong Yingtian. 160min. Mandarin with EST

Dream of Red Mansions is a spectacular version of a Kunqu opera (UNESCO recognised Kunqu as a 'Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity'), brought to the screen by an acclaimed writer-director. It's adapted from one of China's most popular novels, written in the mid-18th century, which charts the rise and decay of a noble family, and touches on many cultural aspects of feudal China. This very special event is brought to the BFI Southbank in partnership with Filming East Festival (FEF), who invite the three lead actors and members of the production team to take part in a post-screening panel discussion. Filming East have been organising Chinese film festivals in the UK since 2007, and with extensive links to the Chinese film industry they not only offer the UK audience cultural exposure to contemporary China, but also the UK film industry a portal to their Chinese counterparts: filmingeast.org

There will be a short interval between the film and discussion.

Sun 5 Oct 14:00 – 18:30 NFT3



Chinaphobia On Screen

In this richly-illustrated talk, Christopher Frayling, cultural historian and acclaimed writer on film, draws on his forthcoming book *The Yellow Peril: Dr Fu Manchu and the Rise of Chinaphobia* to explore problematic representations of Chinese people in British and American film. Frayling's talk offers a fascinating counterpart to our landmark season *A Century of Chinese Cinema*, and key context for serials such as *Dr. Sin Fang* (1928), recently added to BFI Player. Following his talk, Frayling will join others in a panel discussion to further explore the issues raised.

Tickets £6.50

Mon 29 Sept 18:30 NFT3

New Directions: Film screenings

Center Stage (*Ruan Lingyu*) Hong Kong 1992. Dir Stanley Kwan. With Maggie Cheung, Tony Leung Kar-Fai, Carina Lau. 167min. Cantonese, Mandarin with EST

Director Stanley Kwan and star Maggie Cheung pay tribute to the legendary and tragically short-lived Chinese cinema icon Ruan Lingyu with this exceptionally innovative biopic. It's an elegant and complex blend of fiction and non-fiction that mixes detailed recreations of key moments from Ruan's life, clips from her films, and charming conversations between Kwan and Cheung about the actress. *Center Stage* is a heartfelt and achingly beautiful testament to one of the true legends of the cinema.

Sun 7 Sept 15:10 NFT3

Tue 16 Sept 20:00 NFT3

The Peach Blossom Land (*Anlian Taohuayuan*) Taiwan 1992. Dir Stan Lai. With Brigitte Lin, Li Lijun, Jin Shijie. 107min. Digital. Mandarin with EST

Two very different theatre companies unwillingly share the same theatre on the same night. The stories of the two plays soon begin to overlap, revealing a shared concern with how the Taiwanese might retain a respect for the past without succumbing to its nightmares. Renowned theatre director Stan Lai adapted his ground-breaking stage work into this formally daring film, with cinematography by Christopher Doyle and a magnificent central performance by Brigitte Lin.

Wed 3 Sept 20:45 NFT2

Sat 6 Sept 18:30 NFT2

The Days (*Dong-Chun de Rizhi*) Mainland 1993. Dir Wang Xiaoshuai. With Liu Xiaodong, Yu Hong, Lou Ye. 80min. Mandarin with EST

Wang Xiaoshuai's debut feature was one of the first truly independent Mainland productions. An incisive portrait of urban anomie focusing on two bohemian artists who drift through the miasma of old Beijing in the 1980s, *The Days* presents a stark disparity to the nostalgic tone and lush visuals of the Fifth Generation with its defiant DIY aesthetic, non-professional leads and resolute present-tenseness.

Mon 1 Sept 20:45 NFT3

Sun 7 Sept 18:20 NFT3

Chungking Express (*Chongqing Senlin*) Hong Kong 1994. Dir Wong Kar Wai. With Tony Leung, Faye Wong, Brigitte Lin, Kaneshiro Takeshi. 98min. Cantonese, Japanese, Hindi, Mandarin with EST. **12**

Wong Kar Wai's dazzlingly rich fusion of offbeat romantic comedy and coolly postmodern reverie has made *Chungking Express* a signature film of millennial cinema. Master cinematographers Christopher Doyle and Lau Wai-keung transform Hong Kong into a woozy array of sublime neons, while the parallel, inverted stories of unrequited love provide comment on contemporary urban life: its seediness, loneliness, pure silliness and its breathless speed.

Sun 7 Sept 20:50 NFT1

Wed 10 Sept 18:30 NFT1

Vive L'Amour (*Aiqing Wansui*) Taiwan 1994. Dir Tsai Ming-liang. With Lee Kang-Sheng, Yang Kuei-Mei, Chen Chao-Jung. 118min. Digital restoration. Mandarin with EST. **15**

Tsai Ming-liang's astonishing second feature follows the interactions of three rootless urban drifters – a lonely real-estate agent, a handsome street vendor and a suicidal gay man – as the trio intersect within the space of a luxurious, vacant condo. Winner of the Golden Lion at the 1994 Venice Film Festival, *Vive L'Amour* connects elements of the Theatre of the Absurd with an atmosphere of creeping ennui, in a constellation of eerily underpopulated urban spaces.

Sun 28 Sept 20:30 NFT3

Thu 2 Oct 20:30 NFT3

Comrades: Almost a Love Story (*Tian Mimi*) Hong Kong 1996. Dir Peter Chan. With Leon Lai, Maggie Cheung, Eric Tsang. 118min. Cantonese, Mandarin with EST

Peter Chan's tender, lyrical boy-meets-girl chronicle begins in 1986, as two ex-pat Mainlanders in Hong Kong (Leon Lai and Maggie Cheung) embark upon a heated love affair that goes on to span a decade and the vast distance between two islands in transition: Hong Kong and New York City. *Comrades* is both a spellbinding romance and a scintillating snapshot of Hong Kong, a megacity on the brink of profound historic change.

Mon 15 Sept 20:30 NFT2

Tue 16 Sept 17:40 NFT2

Made in Hong Kong (*Xianggang zhi Zao*) Hong Kong 1997. Dir Fruit Chan. With Sam Lee, Neiky Yim, Wenbers Lee. 108min. Cantonese with EST. **15**

Made in Hong Kong, the independently made, ultra-low-budget award-winner, follows a low-rent, wannabe gangster as he ineffectively attempts to wheel and deal his way through the Hong Kong underworld. Released in the same year that Hong Kong was returned to the Mainland, Fruit Chan's kinetic, punk rock, low-life portrait is often considered the apex of the 'handover anxiety film' – the unofficial genre visible in various guises throughout the preceding two decades of Hong Kong cinema.

Fri 12 Sept 18:10 NFT3

Thu 18 Sept 20:30 NFT3

In the Mood For Love (*Hua Yang Nian Hua*) Hong Kong 2000. Dir Wong Kar Wai. With Tony Leung, Maggie Cheung, Rebecca Pang. 98min. Cantonese, Shanghainese, French with EST. **PG**

Wong Kar Wai's masterpiece of romantic longing – about a man and a woman (Tony Leung and Maggie Cheung) whose spouses are embroiled in an affair and whose own passion for each other is repressed by tradition, propriety, and a fear of the unknown – is a love letter to much of Chinese cinema history. Recently anointed as the most important Chinese film ever by *Sight & Sound*, *In the Mood for Love* shows Wong at the height of his powers.

Fri 26 Sept 18:30 NFT1

Sun 5 Oct 20:45 NFT1

BFI Flare Presents: Happy Together (*Chun guang zha xie*) Hong Kong 1997. Dir Wong Kar-wai. With Leslie Cheung, Tony Leung Chiu Wai, Chen Chang. 96min. Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish with EST

Happy Together is a melancholic – yet turbulent and spiky – tale of two young Hong Kong lovers living out the waning days of their doomed relationship as expatriates in Buenos Aires. With its global arthouse superstar cast, Argentine setting and Cannes Best Director prize, this is truly transnational cinema – but one with a throb of dislocation, loss and dysfunction at its heart.

Mon 8 Sept 20:45 NFT2

Devils on the Doorstep (*Guizi Lai-le*) Mainland 2000. Dir Jiang Wen. With Jiang Wen, Jiang Hongbo, Kagawa Teruyuki. 164min. Digital. Mandarin, Japanese with EST

Devils on the Doorstep is one of the most praised and controversial films in Chinese cinema history. The second feature directed by superstar Jiang Wen is set in a small village during the Sino-Japanese War, where a randy peasant (Jiang) becomes the unlikely jailer of a captured Japanese soldier. Winner of the Grand Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, *Devils on the Doorstep* is a tour de force that startlingly shifts tone from satire and slapstick to full-on melodrama and ferocious, bloody tragedy.

Fri 26 Sept 19:50 NFT2

Sun 28 Sept 15:10 NFT2

Platform (Zhantai) Mainland 2000. Dir Jia Zhangke. With Wang Hongwei, Zhao Tao, Liang Jingdong. 193min. Mandarin, Shanxi with EST. **15**

Ruminative, rigorous and breathtaking, Jia Zhangke's second feature has been recognised as the banner film of the Mainland's Sixth Generation. *Platform* is a decade-spanning chronicle about a group of young performers who transition from being a state-run folk music group to a private outfit offering up frivolous disco routines and punk rock imitations. It's a captivating portrait of a rural society that seems to have passed from the pre to the postmodern virtually overnight.

Sat 27 Sept 16:30 NFT2

Sun 5 Oct 16:00 NFT2

The Missing Gun (*Xun Qiang!*) Mainland 2002. Dir Lu Chuan. With Jiang Wen, Ning Jing, Wu Yujuan. 90min. Mandarin with EST. **12A**

Loosely based on Akira Kurosawa's *Stray Dog*, the debut feature from director Lu Chuan follows a smalltown cop (superstar Jiang Wen) as he desperately tries to track down the revolver he misplaced following a night of drunken revelry. A huge hit at the domestic box office, *The Missing Gun* brought a brash new energy to Chinese cinema and signalled the absorption of the marginal characters of Sixth Generation filmmaking into

mainstream Chinese cinema.

Sat 4 Oct 18:20 NFT2

Tue 7 Oct 20:50 NFT2

Kekexili: Mountain Patrol (*Kekexili*) Mainland 2004. Dir Lu Chuan. With Duo Bujie, Zhang Lei, Qi Liang. 95min. Mandarin, Tibetan with EST. **15**

Kekexili: Mountain Patrol is a rugged hybrid of docudrama and American western set within Tibet's vast mountain ranges. A journalist is embedded with a posse of vigilantes hired by the government to track down antelope poachers, accompanying them on a manhunt as they seek vengeance for a murder of one of their own. Unlike Chen Kaige, Zhang Yimou et al., director Lu Chuan finds not grace in nature but a grim, Darwinian struggle, all the more brutally ironic given the land's extraordinary beauty.

Sat 4 Oct 20:50 NFT3

Mon 6 Oct 18:30 NFT1

Still Life (*Sanxia Hao Ren*) Mainland 2006. Dir Jia Zhangke. With Han Sanming, Zhao Tao, Wang Hongwei. 111min. Digital. Mandarin with EST. **PG**

Jia Zhangke's masterpiece tells the stories of two people – a coal miner in search of his long-lost spouse and child, and a nurse in search of her runaway husband – as they converge upon the ongoing construction of the massive Three Gorges Dam. Magnificently shot by Yu Lik-wai, its elegiac tone is punctuated by moments of levity and even a dash of magic realism. *Still Life* devastatingly depicts a landscape, and the way of life it supported, disappearing in the wake of rapacious modernity.

Wed 10 Sept 20:50 Studio

Sat 13 Sept 20:40 NFT2

Sun 14 Sept 20:40 Studio

NOTES TO EDITORS:

About A Century of Chinese Cinema

Curated by Noah Cowan for TIFF (TIFF Bell Lightbox), in collaboration with China Film Archive (Beijing), Hong Kong Film Archive and Chinese Taipei Film Archive.

About Lycamobile

Lycamobile is a prepaid mobile SIM card provider that provides low-cost, high-quality international and national calls and has acquired over 30 million customers across 17 countries (UK, Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Spain, Australia, France, Germany, Poland, Ireland, Portugal, Italy and the USA). Lycamobile is available through an extensive network of more than one million retail outlets. The brand was initially introduced in 2006 and is already Europe's largest pre-pay MVNO. Lycamobile continues to grow rapidly with further market launches planned throughout 2014.



About Shangri-La

Hong Kong-based Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, one of the world's premier hotel companies, currently owns and/or manages more than 80 hotels under the Shangri-La brand with a room inventory of over 34,000. Over four decades the group has established its brand hallmark of 'hospitality from the heart.' The group has a substantial development pipeline with upcoming projects in mainland China, India, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Qatar, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom. For more information and reservations, please contact a travel professional or access the website at www.shangri-la.com.



About Cathay Pacific Airways

Carmen Tse, Marketing Communications & E-commerce Manager at Cathay Pacific Airways, commented: *“Flying five times a day from London to Hong Kong, and onwards to 21 destinations within mainland China, we are committed to bringing China and the Far East closer to the UK to share cultural experiences. We are delighted to be supporting Electric Shadows, the BFI’s film season in 2014 which will showcase some of China’s most iconic films ever created. Serving business and leisure travellers, Cathay Pacific has connecting flights from Hong Kong International Airport to more than 170 destinations worldwide.”*

About BFI Film Audience Network

The BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) is a ground-breaking initiative that goes to the heart of the BFI’s vision and new audience development strategy to help put film at the centre of UK cultural life, as set out in the BFI’s *Film Forever* five-year plan.

Film-watching is one of the UK’s most loved and important cultural activities, but many audiences across the UK do not get the opportunity to see a diverse range of films in a cinema setting. For filmmakers, getting films onto cinema screens is a highly competitive business, particularly for specialised films which includes archive, documentary, independent and foreign language films. The BFI FAN aims to change this.

- In a first for the UK, the BFI is investing up to £8.7 million of Lottery funding over four years (2013-2017) through partnerships with nine lead organisations (Film Hubs) to work full-time with cinema exhibitors, film festivals, educators, film societies, community venues, film archives and other organisations in their regions or nations to boost audiences for film across the UK.
- The Film Hubs, which drive audience engagement locally, will work together with the BFI at a UK-wide level to grow audiences for British independent and specialised film. They currently comprise: Broadway, Nottingham and Cambridge Film Trust; Chapter, Cardiff; Cornerhouse, Manchester; Film London; Queen’s Film Theatre, Belfast; Regional Screen Scotland; the University of Brighton; Showroom Sheffield and National Media Museum, Bradford; and Watershed, Bristol. These organisations and their partners form the BFI FAN.
- The BFI FAN is also investing in targeted training and programming activity, in support for the non theatrical sector as well as improving access to cinema for people with hearing or sight loss, through strategic partners including the Independent Cinema Office, the British Federation of Film Societies and Your Local Cinema.com

More partners will join the network in the coming months as it grows and expands across the UK.

In ten years’ time, we want to look back on the setting up of the BFI FAN as a turning point for film culture in the UK, embracing film not just as a form of entertainment, but also as a way of engaging audiences in ideas, dialogue and debate about culture and society.



About the BFI

The BFI is the lead body for film in the UK with the ambition to create a flourishing film environment in which innovation, opportunity and creativity can thrive by:

- Connecting audiences to the widest choice of British and World cinema
- Preserving and restoring the most significant film collection in the world for today and future generations
- Championing emerging and world class film makers in the UK
- Investing in creative, distinctive and entertaining work
- Promoting British film and talent to the world
- Growing the next generation of film makers and audiences

The BFI Southbank is open to all. BFI members are entitled to a discount on all tickets. BFI Southbank Box Office tel: 020 7928 3232. Unless otherwise stated tickets are £11.00, concs £8.50 Members pay £1.50 less on any ticket. Website www.bfi.org.uk/southbank

Tickets for FREE screenings and events must be booked in advance by calling the Box Office to avoid disappointment

BFI Shop

The BFI Shop is stocked and staffed by BFI experts with over 1,200 book titles and 1,000 DVDs to choose from, including hundreds of acclaimed books and DVDs produced by the BFI.

The benugo bar & kitchen

Eat, drink and be merry in panoramic daylight. benugo's décor is contemporary, brightly lit and playful with a lounge space, bar and dining area. The place to network, hang out, unpack a film, savour the best of Modern British or sip on a cocktail.

There's more to discover about film and television through the BFI. Our world-renowned archival collections, cinemas, festivals, films, publications and learning resources are here to inspire you.

***** PICTURE DESK *****

A selection of images for journalistic use in promoting BFI Southbank screenings can be found at www.image.net under BFI / BFI Southbank / Southbank 2014 / BFI A Century of Chinese Cinema