

24th Annual "Made in Hong Kong" Film Festival Kicks-Off in Washington DC

The 24th annual "Made in Hong Kong" film festival kicked-off yesterday night (July 18, Washington time) at the Freer Gallery of Art of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC with the premiere of the acclaimed film, *Still Human*, and an appearance by the film's lead actress, Crisel Consunji.

Speaking at the premiere event, the Commissioner for Economic and Trade Affairs, USA, Mr Eddie Mak, said that the Hong Kong government had long played a complementary role in supporting the film industry, which had been the cornerstone of Hong Kong's creative industries. Mr Mak highlighted Create Hong Kong's First Feature Film Initiative, a competitive film funding programme which aims to nurture new directors. Since its launch in 2013, the initiative has identified many talented young directors and helped fund the production of a repertoire of films. The film festival's premiere film, *Still Human*, was a winning recipient of this initiative.

Written and directed by first-time director Oliver Chan, *Still Human* is a dramedy about a brusque wheelchair-bound pensioner, played by veteran actor Anthony Wong, and the live-in domestic helper, played by Crisel Consunji, hired to care for him. Crisel Consunji's performance won her the Best New Performer award at the 38th Hong Kong Film Awards. The film also picked up top prizes this year at the 21st Far East Film Festival in Udine, Italy, including the Golden Mulberry audience award and the Black Dragon critics' award. Crisel Consunji will appear at a screening of *Still Human* on July 19 after which she will take part in a discussion moderated by the gallery's curator of film, Tom Vick.

Through the period till August 18, this year's film festival features an array of recent films including *Project Gutenberg* which received a remarkable seven Hong Kong Film Awards.

The annual "Made in Hong Kong" film festival is co-organised by The Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, Washington DC and the Smithsonian Institution's Freer Gallery of Art. It showcases the vitality of Hong Kong's creative talents and enhances the United States-Hong Kong bilateral ties through a shared appreciation of the arts.

