

Chinese Film Panorama 2021 to showcase outstanding works in diverse genres (with photos)

Chinese Film Panorama 2021 will be held from September 17 to October 29, showcasing 12 outstanding movies recently produced by the Mainland. Jointly presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and the South China Film Industry Workers Union, the films will be shown at venues including the Grand Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, the Cinema of the Hong Kong Film Archive and the lecture halls of the Hong Kong Space Museum and the Hong Kong Science Museum.

The opening film is "The Reunions" (2021), directed by Dapeng. By following what happens in regard to Jixiang, an elderly person with dementia, after the passing of his mother, the movie depicts the morality struggle and dilemma of a family. This autobiographical docudrama with narration blurs the line between the real and the imagined, breaking new ground for movie genres. The first part of the film, "Jixiang", won Best Live Action Short Film at the 55th Golden Horse Awards.

Also themed on family, the Fifth Generation director Yin Li's "A Hustle Bustle New Year" (2021) portrays the warmth and ugliness of humans through what an ordinary family encounters during the Chinese New Year period. To contemporary adults who are busy earning a living, Chinese New Year can be an exhausting time that may bring them burdens.

Chinese cinema has received enduring success at the box office in recent years. "Detective Chinatown" duo Tang Ren and Qin Feng in Chen Sicheng's "Detective Chinatown 3" (2021) are invited to Tokyo to investigate a mysterious murder case. With a cast of movie stars from the Mainland, Japan and Thailand, the film is a noteworthy showcase of Chinese production going global. In Xu Lei's debut "Summer Detective" (2019), Chaoying's friend Shuhe is injured in a hit-and-run accident. To find out the driver, Chaoying and his other friend Zhanyi start their own investigation, which is infused with a comical touch. The film won the Best Cinematic Script award at the 13th FIRST International Film Festival and Film of Merit in the 28th Shanghai Film Critics Awards.

In "Vortex" (2019), the notable work of young director Gan Jianyu, car mechanic Xiaojun is stuck with a large gambling debt and is convinced by his friend to steal cars for money and even ends up in a kidnapping case. The action scenes and the rhythm of the film bear a resemblance to the cops-and-gangsters genre of Hong Kong cinema. The absurd tragicomedy "A Cool Fish" (2018) by Rao Xiaozhi centres on a messy robbery that traps two robbers, a security guard and his paralysed sister, under a same roof. The film won the Golden Lotus Award for Best Picture, Best Actor and Best Supporting Actor at the 10th Macao International Movie Festival. Lu Yang's fantasy thriller "A

Writer's Odyssey" (2021) follows the interactions linking reality and a virtual world between a father who is searching for his missing daughter and a novelist. This daring and highly imaginative work is full of metaphors describing modern society. The film won Film of Merit in the 29th Shanghai Film Critics Awards.

Directed by Li Xiaofeng, the film noir "Back to the Wharf" (2020) features a promising student, Song Hao, whose future is ruined after a case of mistaken identity in a public exam and who becomes an exile from his hometown for 15 years. Later, as he becomes a father, Song decides to change the future of his newborn child through self-salvation.

Filled with breathtakingly gorgeous cinematography, Wang Rui's "Chaogtu with Sarula" (2019) depicts the life of a married couple living in the Mongolian prairie. The husband becomes curious and fancies life outside Mongolia, and conflicts over values arise in their marriage as a result. The film won Best Artistic Contribution at the 32nd Tokyo International Film Festival and Best Director at the 33rd China Film Golden Rooster Awards. Directed and scripted by Peng Fei, "Tracing Her Shadow" (2020) follows Grandma Chen traveling to Nara in search of her adopted daughter, Lihua, a Japanese war orphan whom Chen hasn't heard from since being repatriated back to Japan. The film highlights the history of war orphans as well as the lives and struggles of orphans and their next generation, and was a Special Program entry at the 33rd Tokyo International Film Festival and Film of Merit in the 29th Shanghai Film Critics Awards.

Based on well-known Chinese mythology, young director Jiao Zi's innovative animation "Ne Zha" (2019) tells of the story of a modern family in which Ne Zha's father, Li Jing, spoils his son while the coming-of-age Ne Zha wishes to gain recognition but ends up with troubles. The film, which resonates greatly with parents and teens, won Best Animated Feature at the 33rd China Film Golden Rooster Awards and Best Screenplay in the 35th Hundred Flowers Awards, as well as Best Animation, Best Animation Director and Best Animation Screenplay in the 16th China Animation & Comic Competition Golden Dragon Award.

In addition, Xu Zhanxiong's "Wild Grass" (2020), which tells of young people leaving their hometowns in pursuit of a better life in the big city, will be specially screened at the Rayson Huang Theatre of the University of Hong Kong, the Auditorium of North District Town Hall and Cine-Art House (Maritime Square) with free admission. The film won a Golden Crane Award of China Film Week at the 33rd Tokyo International Film Festival and Best Creative Project at the 20th Shanghai International Film Festival.

"Detective Chinatown 3" and "Tracing Her Shadow" are in Putonghua and Japanese, "A Cool Fish" is in Putonghua and the Guizhou dialect, "Chaogtu with Sarula" is in Putonghua and Mongolian, "Ne Zha" is dubbed in Cantonese, and the other films are in Putonghua. All films have Chinese and English subtitles.

Tickets priced at \$60 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For

credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999. Tickets for free screenings will be distributed at the respective venues of the free screenings from September 10 onwards. Each person can receive up to two tickets per screening on a first-come, first-served basis while stocks last. For programme details, please call 2734 2900 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en/listing.html?id=25.

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, audiences should take note of the latest service arrangements for screening venues, admission and seating to be implemented. For details, please call 2734 2900 or visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/fp/en/ticketing.html?id=25.

