

Film Archive to hold free screening of "Emperor Zhengde's Night Visit to the Dragon and Phoenix Inn" in support of World Day for Audiovisual Heritage (with photo)

In support of World Day for Audiovisual Heritage, the Hong Kong Film Archive (HKFA) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department will present a free screening of "Emperor Zhengde's Night Visit to the Dragon and Phoenix Inn" (1958) at Piazza C of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre at 7pm on October 27 (Saturday). The film stars Yam Kim-fai, Lai Yee, Fung Wong Nui, Chan Kam-tong, Tam Lan-hing, Lee Hoi-chuen and Yam Bing-ye.

"Emperor Zhengde's Night Visit to the Dragon and Phoenix Inn", one of the treasures in the HKFA's collection, is the first film with the digital reconstruction and restoration procedures completed solely by the HKFA. The original colour negatives, a black-and-white print and other materials were transferred to the HKFA by descendants of Lee Gee-hing of Man Li Film Company in 1994. Since parts of the original colour negatives and the soundtrack were damaged, the film cannot be screened in its original colour version.

With advanced technology the HKFA conservators digitised the soundtracks of the black-and-white print and some edited-out film before synchronising the audio with the colour visuals from the negatives. In this colour version, the picture and sound quality were improved with digital restoration techniques. The HKFA made the effort to restore the movie's original appearance from 60 years ago in order to share its achievements in film conservation and restoration through the screening.

"Emperor Zhengde's Night Visit to the Dragon and Phoenix Inn" is an opera film adapted by famed writer-director Wong Hok-sing from a folk tale. When travelling in disguise, Emperor Zhengde (played by Yam Kim-fai) falls in love with Phoenix (played by Lai Yee) at the Dragon and Phoenix Inn. The Empress (played by Fung Wong Nui) becomes jealous and attempts to hurt Phoenix.

The film was shot in Eastmancolor, which was new in Hong Kong at that time. The process was fully utilised by producer, cinematographer and colour technique consultant Chiu Shu-sun to make the movie colourful and eye-catching.

The film is in Cantonese with Chinese and English subtitles.

Admission is free and will start at 6.15pm. Limited space will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Audience members are

encouraged to bring their own seating mats. For programme enquiries, please call 2739 2139 or visit www.filmarchive.gov.hk/en_US/web/hkfa/programmesandexhibitions/2018unesco/index.html.

In 2005, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization designated October 27 of every year as World Day for Audiovisual Heritage. It promotes awareness of the importance of preserving audio-visual documents from the past, which play an integral role in recording local and regional cultures.

