

Film festival on Hong Kong comedies launched in Beijing

The 9th Hong Kong Thematic Film Festival, entitled "A Witty Fantasia: Comedies in Hong Kong Cinema", was launched tonight (November 6) at Broadway Cinematheque in Beijing, the first of the nine cities in the Mainland where the event will be staged. The film festival is jointly presented by the Office of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in Beijing (the Beijing Office) and Broadway Cinematheque.

Comedy has all along been a major genre of Hong Kong cinema. This year's film festival introduces the unique sense of humour in Hong Kong's movies by showcasing classic comedy films that feature a variety of comedic elements, ranging from the droll portrayal of an everyman's life and kung fu comedies that merge martial arts with humour to popular comedies in celebration of the Lunar New Year, and the "mo lei tau" (nonsensical) slapstick culture. The screening of the movies is aimed at promoting Hong Kong's film culture and fostering closer exchanges between the film industries in Hong Kong and the Mainland.

The opening ceremony was officiated by the Deputy Director of the Beijing Office, Miss Pamela Lam; the Chief Executive Officer of Edko Films Limited, Mr Bill Kong; and the National Operations Manager of Broadway Circuit, Ms Jane Wang. Renowned film producer Raymond Wong, the screenwriter of this year's opening movie "Aces Go Places", made a video-recorded speech for the ceremony. There will be two exchange sessions during the film festival. Wong will discuss the stories behind his productions in an online exchange session. Director Joe Ma will attend another exchange session in the cinema to share with the audience his views on filmmaking.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Miss Lam said the film festival has managed to showcase a number of excellent Hong Kong movies and invite seasoned filmmakers to interact with the audience using online and offline means, despite the challenges brought about by the epidemic. She said it fully reflected the perseverance of industry personnel in promoting film culture.

Miss Lam remarked that with the implementation of the Agreement Concerning Amendment to the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement Agreement on Trade in Services on June 1, 2020, new liberalisation measures have been introduced to a number of important services sectors such as the film industry. This enables more participation in the development of the Mainland market for the industry. The HKSAR Government has also earmarked around \$260 million under the Film Development Fund to implement five major measures to increase the number of local film productions, nurture young directors and scriptwriting talents and enhance professional training, with a view to adding value to the trade, she said.

A total of seven movies will be screened in the film festival this year

in Beijing, namely the opening film "Aces Go Places", "Games Gamblers Play", "The Private Eyes", "Security Unlimited", "All's Well End's Well, Too", "Legend of the Dragon" and "Project A". The movies will be screened from November 6 to 15 at Broadway Cinematheque and Broadway Cinema (apm store) in Beijing.

After the Beijing leg, the film festival will be presented in Shanghai, Hangzhou, Jinan, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Ningbo, Dalian and Tianjin until January 2021.