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Foreword



Chairperson
Boo Junfeng

The past year has brought much-needed good news for Singapore's film community. Theatres like Golden Village, Shaw Theatres and Filmhouse have stood steadfast even as the cinema landscape shifted around them, giving filmmakers and audiences a reason to believe in the future of filmgoing here. We have also welcomed the relaxation of restrictions on screening films in Chinese dialects, a small but meaningful step that opens the door to richer, more textured storytelling on our local screens. And on the international stage, Singapore cinema has continued to shine, with films like *We Are All Strangers* and *The Violinist* earning recognition on the festival circuit and reminding the world of the depth and range of voices coming out of this country.

At SGIFF, we remain committed to being a window to the world, bringing audiences a diverse selection of films that inspire, inform and transform, and championing the innovative voices and pressing stories of our times.

We are also mindful that attention spans are shrinking, and that a love for cinema is best nurtured early. This year, we are proud to introduce the Junior Explorers, a programme specially designed to bring families with children into the cinema so as to spark curiosity and wonder in the next generation of filmgoers.

None of this would be possible without our community. Our heartfelt thanks to the donors and sponsors whose generosity sustains our work, and to our volunteers whose dedication carries us through every edition.

To our audiences, old and new: thank you for showing up, year after year. May this year's lineup move you, challenge you and remind you why cinema matters. See you at the cinemas!

Executive Director
Jeremy Chua

A film is completed when it arrives in front of an audience, and that encounter deserves the same care as everything preceding it. This edition is built around that conviction. Over two weeks, SGIFF will offer abundant opportunities for immersion, discourse and unexpected discovery.

We are widening the scope of our audience and changing how we do things. We asked ourselves: what should a film festival in Singapore feel like, and has SGIFF cultivated the character and aspirations of the city-state to which it belongs?

We began with the calendar. Our dates have moved clear of the holidays and the blockbuster season into a stretch of the year when independent world cinema can be sought out with greater attention.

On the audience front, we have been asking who has been going to the cinemas and, more urgently, who has not. This year's programme expands the age range at both ends and makes room for those whom the festival may have neglected in the past. We are trying new ways of presenting works, including relaxed screenings and unconventional formats, so as to welcome children, new interest groups and subculture seekers into the fold.

We have also enhanced our industry programme so that it functions more effectively as a gateway for cultural leaders, artists, innovators and technologists to discover one another, while elevating and collaborating with local talent.

Beyond the film screenings and live discussions, our booklet now carries independent criticism and essays by leading film writers from across the world. Collectively, they paint a picture of the zeitgeist that these films inhabit.

Finally, we are delighted to launch a new ticketing platform that will give you greater control over your festival planning. We will continue to improve as we learn more about our audiences' needs.

To our partners, volunteers, donors and all of you holding this booklet in your hand—thank you for your presence and continued support. Stay curious, and see you at the festival.



Programme Director
Thong Kay Wee

Every year, my programming team and I ask ourselves: how can we inspire curiosity without creating barriers? We want to push the needle forward with every edition when it comes to cultivating broader film appreciation in Singapore, but we can only build a vibrant film culture when everyone feels invited to participate. This is a very delicate balance to strike.

For me, SGIFF is at its best when it becomes a crossroads. It is deeply gratifying to put local and regional voices on the same stage as international cinema and show how our stories hold their own in the global conversation. At the same time, we never shy away from works that complicate their forms for a new artistic vision or films that tackle difficult, complex human truths. A good film festival isn't just about screening great films; it's also about creating a shared space where our audience can grow alongside our programming and discover new perspectives together.



This year, we are deepening our commitment to expansive storytelling by introducing two new programming directions. We aim to create a more inclusive space by encouraging young audiences to take their first steps into the world of film with our new Junior Explorers section. With the addition of sensory-friendly screenings paired with interactive post-show activities, this programme reflects shifting family dynamics and celebrates differences as something to be embraced. In contrast, our Undercurrent section evolves to include more screen-based performances. Showcasing interdisciplinary works that explore strands of digital virtuality, analogue film forms and physical embodiment, the curation pushes the boundaries of the cinematic experience. Together, these expansions invite audiences to journey from early cinematic discovery to the bolder corners of moving image art, opening new pathways for dialogue and imagination.

Even so, our traditional competition sections remain close to my heart. They represent the festival's illustrious legacy, capture Asia's creative pulse and empower us as a team of Asian film programmers to define Asian cinema on our own terms. By holding space for both formal experimentation and authentic, lived experiences, this year's competition lineup possesses the wisdom and emotional connection to deepen our understanding of life. I can't wait for our audience to experience the bold ideas and sensations of what we consider to be the year's most defining short and feature films from the region.

Just like a musical composition or the ebb and flow of the tides, I believe that our work relies on pacing, tension, release and contrast to shape how an audience feels over the course of a whole festival. And seeing these experiences deeply felt in the dark of the theatre—sparking intimate, lasting connections—is the real heart of why I do this.

Festival Ambassador
Rebecca Lim
Mediacorp Artiste

Rebecca Lim is a highly acclaimed actress from Singapore, known for her versatility and maturity across both English and Chinese dramas. Rebecca's journey began at 18 when she ranked top five at Miss Singapore Universe and won Miss Photogenic, setting the stage for her acting career. She first rose to local fame with her role as a trainee lawyer Wendy Lim in the critically acclaimed legal drama, The Pupil, which earned her the Best Actress Award at the 2010 Asian Television Awards. Since then, she's won Mediacorp's "Top 10 Most Popular Female Artiste" award for ten consecutive years and became the first Singaporean to receive the Asian Star Prize at the Seoul International Drama Awards in 2016. With Rebecca's talent and increasing presence in Asian cinema, she's definitely an actress to watch as her career gains momentum regionally and beyond.



This is my third year as Ambassador for the Singapore International Film Festival. Each year, I find myself learning something new. Over the past two years, I've learned so much about the world of film; my respect for everyone who has poured their time, heart and creativity into making it continues to grow.

Once a year, we come together through a shared love of films, but I think it's also about something much bigger—connection. In the middle of our busy everyday lives, SGIFF offers us pockets of time to slow down, sit together and lose ourselves in a story. In the cinemas, we leave our worlds behind and enter another one, together.

The conversations I've had with people through SGIFF have opened my eyes in so many ways. I feel truly humbled by them, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue exploring this world of film and everything it has to offer. What I love most is that film really is for anyone and everyone. You don't have to know anything about cinema to be moved by a story, to discover something new or simply to share an experience with someone.

And this year feels especially meaningful because I'll be bringing my son along for the ride. With the new Junior Explorers section for children, I'm looking forward to experiencing the festival through his eyes too. And I know it's going to be a very special memory for us to share.

A huge thank you to the incredible team behind SGIFF. So much care, time and hard work goes into putting together this festival, much of it behind the scenes. But anyone who walks through the doors will feel the passion that drives the festival team, who have once again created something meaningful and memorable for all of us, and I'm so grateful for that.

I can't wait to meet everyone this year and, more than anything, I'm excited for you to experience all that SGIFF has to offer. See you at the festival!

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Featuring over 100 films by filmmakers from more than 50 countries

Venues + Abbreviations

CT **Capitol Theatre**
17 Stamford Road,
Singapore 178907

EAS **Esplanade Annexe Studio**
Level 1, Esplanade Theatres on the Bay,
1 Esplanade Drive, Singapore 038981

ETS **Esplanade Theatre Studio**
Level 4, Esplanade Theatres on the Bay,
1 Esplanade Drive, Singapore 038981

EWR **Esplanade White Room**
Level 3, Esplanade Mall, 1 Esplanade
Drive, Singapore 038981

FHRR **Filmhouse, Redrum / Green Room**
FHGR 6001 Beach Rd, #05-00, Golden
Mile Tower, Singapore 199589

GVB3 **Golden Village Bugis+**
GVB4 201 Victoria St, #05-01 Bugis+,
GVB5 Singapore 188067
GVB6
GVB7

GVC1 **Golden Village Cineleisure**
GVC2 Cineleisure, Level 6,
GVC4 8 Grange Road, Singapore 239695

GVV **Golden Village VivoCity Max**
1 HarbourFront Walk
#02-30 VivoCity, Singapore 098585

LF **LASALLE, Flexible Performance Space**
LASALLE College of the Arts, Block F Level 1
#F102, 1 McNally Street, Singapore 187940

SAT **LASALLE, Singapore Airlines Theatre**
LASALLE College of the Arts, Basement 1,
1 McNally Street, Singapore 187940

MBSST **Sands Theatre, Marina Bay Sands**
10 Bayfront Ave, B1-69/70 The Shoppes,
Marina Bay Sands, Singapore 018971

MBSSGB **Sands Grand Ballroom, Marina Bay Sands**
10 Bayfront Avenue, Level 5, Marina Bay Sands
Expo & Convention Centre, Singapore 018956

NMS **Gallery Theatre, National Museum of Singapore**
Gallery Theatre, 93 Stamford Road,
Singapore 178897

OT **Oldham Theatre**
1 Canning Rise, Singapore 179868

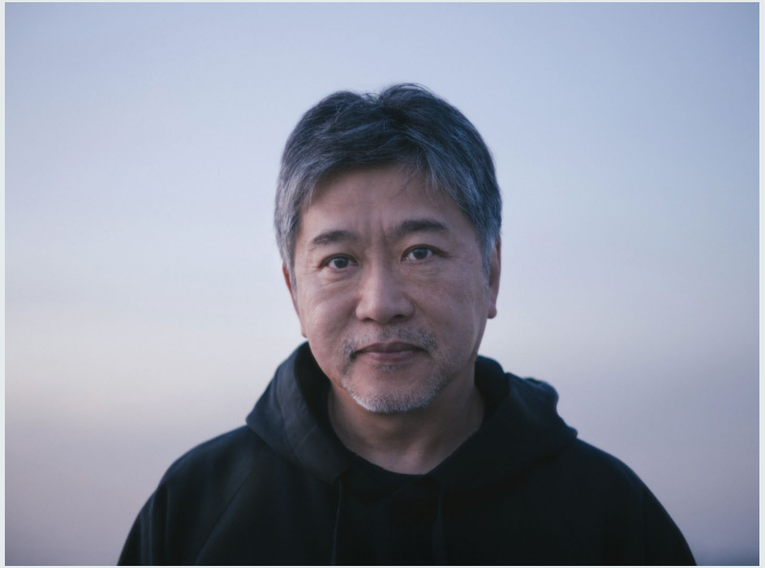
Cinema Honorary Award
Hirokazu Koreeda

Look Back
Turn to p. 81

In Conversation With Hirokazu Koreeda
Turn to p. 106

Hirokazu Koreeda is one of contemporary Japanese cinema's most celebrated filmmakers. After graduating from Waseda University in 1987, he began his career directing acclaimed television documentaries, a background that heavily shaped his sensitive, observational directorial style.

He made his feature film directorial debut with *Maborosi* (1995), which won the Golden Osella at Venice. He continued to create works exploring family dynamics, memory, grief and societal outcasts, including *After Life* (1998), *Nobody Knows* (2004), *Still Walking* (2008) and *Like Father, Like Son* (2013), which earned the Jury Prize at Cannes. His artistic pinnacle came with *Shoplifters* (2018), a heartbreaking exploration of unconventional family bonds that won the prestigious Palme d'Or at Cannes and received an Academy Award nomination.



In recent years, Koreeda has expanded his creative footprint internationally with foreign-language projects like *The Truth* (2019) and *Broker* (2022), anchoring his worldwide reputation as a leading figure in Japanese cinema. In 2026, he released his seventeenth and eighteenth feature films, *Sheep in the Box* and *Look Back*.

The **Cinema Honorary Award** has stood as SGIFF's highest accolade since its introduction in 2014, recognising filmmakers who have made exceptional and enduring contributions to Asian cinema.

This prestigious award previously honoured visionary directors such as South Korea's Im Kwon-taek, Indonesia's Garin Nugroho, Iran's Jafar Panahi and Indian-Canadian filmmaker Deepa Mehta. This year, the festival is proud to present the award to Japanese director Hirokazu Koreeda.

Screen Icon Award
Aamir Khan

Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India
Turn to p. 101

In Conversation With Aamir Khan
Turn to p. 107

Aamir Khan is one of Indian cinema's most influential actors, directors and producers, renowned for a filmography that blends commercial entertainment with profound, socially conscious storytelling.

Born into a prominent filmmaking family, Khan made his first on-screen appearance as a child actor in *Yaadon Ki Baaraat* (1973). He achieved breakthrough stardom with the romantic drama *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak* (1988). Widely known as "Mr Perfectionist" for his meticulous role preparation and dedication, he consistently led critical and commercial blockbusters, including the Oscar-nominated *Lagaan* (2001), *3 Idiots* (2009), *PK* (2014) and *Dangal* (2016)—the latter becoming the highest-grossing Indian film globally.

He is the recipient of four National Film Awards and nine Filmfare Awards. Beyond



acting, he made his acclaimed directorial debut with *Taare Zameen Par* (2007) and has produced numerous milestone films under Aamir Khan Productions. Honoured with the Padma Shri in 2003 and the Padma Bhushan in 2010 by the Government of India, Khan remains a transformative figure in global cinema.

The **Screen Icon Award** honours Asian actors who have made a profound impact as creative forces in film.

Previously known as the Cinema Icon Award, the Screen Icon Award celebrates an actor's exceptional contributions to bringing Asian stories to life on screen. Past recipients include iconic performers such as Michelle Yeoh, Koji Yakusho, Joan Chen, Fan Bingbing and Youn Yuh-jung. This year, the festival is proud to present the award to Indian actor Aamir Khan.



Aamir Khan in *Laagan*

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Festival Opening

The Assassin(s)
암살자(들)

Undeterred by the intimidation of state agents, an intrepid detective, reporter and news editor join forces to uncover the truth about a shooting in this gripping procedural thriller.

South Korea, 131mins, PG13 (Some Violence and Coarse Language), Southeast Asian Premiere, 2026

LANGUAGE Korean, Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Hur Jin-ho
PRODUCER Kim Won-kuk
CAST Yoo Hai-jin, Park Hae-il, Lee Min-ho

SCREENING **MBS**
21 OCT, WED, 8:30pm | 131 mins
SCREENING **NMS**
22 OCT, THU, 2pm | 131 mins

South Korea's Liberation Day, 15 August 1974. Detective Cheol-gu leaves for work as part of the security team at the National Theater of Korea where president Park Chung-hee is due to make a national address. But the day descends into chaos when a shooting occurs.

After finding out that the crime scene tells a story contradicting official accounts, Cheol-gu, together with a young reporter and a newspaper editor, launches his own investigation to unearth the truth. Faced with the strong-arm tactics of a tyrannical government to silence dissent, the trio put their lives and careers on the line to pursue justice.

Though *The Assassin(s)* is a dramatised account of a historical event, the state-sponsored violence and communist bogeyman that mark this turbulent period of South Korean history are well documented. Hur Jin-ho's sleek and accomplished procedural thriller offers a chilling look into a dictatorial regime where media freedom is suppressed and the law is twisted for political ends.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

The oeuvre of South Korean filmmaker **Hur Jin-ho** has mostly focused on the exploration of love and human relationships. These include *Christmas in August* (1998), which screened at Cannes and competed at SGIFF, *One Fine Spring Day* (2001), which premiered at Rotterdam, and *Dangerous Liaisons* (2012), which also premiered at Cannes. His previous feature, *A Normal Family* (2023), screened at SGIFF.









Festival Closing

Vintage Violence

An American livestreamer brings a pair of vintage denims to Tokyo to sell, but the yakuza gets involved and all goes berserk in this madcap romp that reflects our zeitgeist's screen obsession and digital voyeurism.

USA, Japan, 105mins, M18 (Gore and Violence), Asian Premiere, 2026

LANGUAGE English, Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Eugene Kotlyarenko
PRODUCER Alex Hughes, Riccardo Maddalosso, Hiroto Ogi, Eugene Kotlyarenko
CAST Cole Sprouse, Kiko Mizuhara, Nijiro Murakami, Pierre Taki, Hio Miyazawa

SCREENING **CAPITOL**
1 NOV, SUN, 5pm | 105 mins **+Q&A**

While livestreaming his latest urbex adventure in an abandoned mine in Colorado, Carter finds a pair of nineteenth-century Levi's jeans. Izumi, one of his subscribers in Japan, suggests he brings it to Tokyo where he can easily sell it in the country's hot denim market and make a killing. But the venture quickly combusts when Edoga, a denim fiend of the underworld, gets involved, thanks to Izumi's debt-ridden boyfriend. Amid flurries of texts, the plot grows increasingly frenetic and unhinged as an exiled yakuza, now armed with a cybernetic middle finger that fires a drug mist, comes seeking revenge on Edoga.

Wearing an aesthetic of excess and camp, the film's manic energy comes from not only its blistering editing but also its split screens—text messaging, streaming and the accompanying live chat exploding with sh*tposts. A memorable chase scene through a gaming arcade, featuring a diegetically glitching Jun Togawa song and Bluetooth earbuds, perhaps captures the spirit of our times: a world grown so loud yet so empty that all we have left are the dopamine highs of a good chase thoroughly mediated by technology.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

The work of Ukrainian-American filmmaker **Eugene Kotlyarenko** explores love and cultural madness in the age of social media. Born in Odesa, he moved to New York where he studied film, philosophy and literature at Columbia University. His past features include *Wobble Palace* (2018) and *Spree* (2020), which also centres online culture. *Vintage Violence* premiered at Toronto in the Midnight Madness lineup.





SHOWCASE: FILMS FROM THE PHILIPPINES



Filipiñana (p. 82)



Macho Dancer (p. 102)

SGIFF is proud to spotlight a selection of films made in the Philippines or with Filipino co-production.

The feature films, *Filipiñana* and *Macho Dancer*, capture everyday life across different time periods with incisive clarity, while selected short films showcase emerging voices engaging with the country's diverse storytelling traditions. These films embody an unrestrained independent spirit and boundless creativity.

Kara: The Burning Woman **(p. 30)**
Surface Tension **(p. 38)**
They Made Monsters **(p. 32)**
You Dreamt You Saw Yourself But Couldn't See Your Face **(p. 74)**



Nagi Notes (p. 83)

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FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

Asian Feature Film Competition

Experience bold new cinematic visions by both emerging and established Asian directors.

As a showcase for prominent talents and a platform for discovery, the Asian Feature Film Competition champions the defining works of the year, celebrating the full spectrum of filmmaking virtuosity in the region.

Dive into this thrilling lineup of ten films that collectively capture the vibrant pulse and evolving stories of Asia's cultural landscape.

Written by Thong Kay Wee
Co-authored by Hsieh I-Hsuan, Monica Gyamlani and Sim Jiaying

Launched in 1991, the Singapore International Film Festival is the first Asian international film festival to introduce a dedicated competitive section for Asian feature films. This illustrious legacy accompanies the ongoing mission to define the virtuosity of Asian cinema on our own terms. How can the Festival continue to cast a critical eye while navigating evolving trends and an increasingly industry-oriented environment? How do we continue to celebrate established, anticipated names while making room for distinct new voices that might otherwise be overlooked?

These are questions and responsibilities that the current team do not take lightly. The competition showcases geographical range while elevating marginalised, female and nonbinary voices whose lived experiences ground each film with cultural nuance. Beyond representation, we seek out films with insights and wisdom that can deepen our understanding of life, as well as those with an authentic emotional connection. And even if a story is a familiar one, we assess how its form and aesthetic innovate to offer fresh perspectives and enrich what the film is trying to express.

As the only film in the lineup set in Singapore, Ang Geck Geck's *Ah Girl* peers into a girl's fraught childhood from a child's-eye level and through an episodic structure mirroring a child's fragmented mind. Carried by remarkably authentic performances from its young cast, its 4:3 frame further gives shape to a child's limited worldview, transporting us directly into their overlooked emotional landscape. Similarly, Kohei Kadowaki's *We Are Aliens* dives into child psychology with precision, tracing a fractured connection between two boys through a dual-perspective structure. The first-ever animated feature in the competition, it mixes rotoscoped and hand-drawn animation for a dreamlike, tactile quality that captures the quiet everyday of contemporary Japan, while punctuating it with surreal visual distortions that conjure the unease born from trauma and alienation.

In Kamila Andini's *Four Seasons in Java*, these feelings of estrangement are exemplified by the heroine who makes an unwelcomed return to her Javanese hometown after years of imprisonment. Driven by a fierce resistance against patriarchal violence and heightened by a magical realist treatment, the film cleverly combines elements of animism and the extraterrestrial to enact a cosmic revenge tale for outcasts and the abused. Abinash Bikram Shah's *Elephants in the Fog* also engages with the marginalised, bringing focus to the ancient third-gender Kinnar community in Nepal as their matriarch grapples with obligations and desires against the Kinnar's sacred vows of celibacy. By casting performers from the community and drawing directly from their lived experiences, this riveting drama portrays their plight against a prejudiced world with clarity and sincerity. Such authentic approaches are equally evident in Shahrbanoo Sadat's *No Good Men*, which eschews standard war-trauma tropes by deftly manoeuvring romance, humour and political drama within the real-world crisis of the 2021 Taliban takeover. Drawing on the actual experiences of co-creators Sadat and Anwar Hashimi as journalists in Kabul, the semi-autobiographical film deconstructs gender expectations and refuses to be silenced by traditional male structures.

Taking a darker, more nihilistic turn, Makoto Nagahisa's *Burn* exposes a runaway girl's newfound freedom as just another trap hidden within the neon labyrinth of Tokyo's Kabukicho district. As the most stylised entry in the competition, it channels the abandon and claustrophobia of a youth subculture through a nightmarish blend of lo-fi camcorder footage, step-printing, fisheye lenses and cloying digital beats. Morality continues to go up in flames in Phuttiphong Aroonpheng's *The Burning Giants*, where migrant bodies are marked by strange burns from a toxic smog spreading across West Thailand. Interweaving gritty realism inspired by real crimes along the Thai-Myanmar border with a magical realist register that invokes Thai folklore and the *Ramayana*, this dystopian universe exposes the heavy human cost of state-sanctioned displacement.

And when death enters our lives, how can we continue to love through grief? In Yashasvi Juyal's *The Ink-Stained Hand and the Missing Thumb*, a tragic accident spawns a supernatural return, throwing a pair of lovers back into a beguiling state of limbo. Unfolding through an evocative, slow-paced structure that prioritises mood over conventional plot, the film moves gently across layers of time and space to meditate on the final transit between life and death. Centred on an aging matriarch's imminent death, Sompot Chidgasornpongse's *9 Temples to Heaven* follows a family as they lean into rituals and spiritual comforts to resist the inevitable. A road trip film structured around nine temple visits, the camera drifts patiently through the geometry of sacred architecture, questioning the structures of Thai religious power while revealing the growing fissures of modern family life with quiet wisdom. In Dong Jie's *Zoom In*, *Zoom Out*, a missing man dissolves into digital remains within a video game as the film questions how both the physical world and virtual spaces hold on to human connection. By adopting video game environments, surveillance aesthetics and a cold nocturnal tone, the film captures the quiet loneliness of contemporary digital life in China.

Yet across these wildly disparate landscapes, fragments of humanity remain stubbornly resilient. Whether navigating trauma, grief, or systemic silence, these ten films remind us that cinema is ultimately a practice of seeing and feeling deeply. By holding space for both formal experimentation and raw, lived experiences, this year's competition lineup does not merely reflect the complexities of contemporary Asia; it invites us to discover warmth, connection and truth across every plane of existence – if only we know where to look within the frame.

9 Temples to Heaven
9 วัด สู่สวรรค์

Faced with the imminent death of his mother, a man leads three generations of his family on a single-day temple pilgrimage—where prayer meets doubt, and reason wrestles with superstition.

Thailand, Singapore, France, Norway, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Qatar. 140 mins. PG13 (Some Smoking Scenes). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Thai
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Sompot Chidgasornpongse
PRODUCER Kissada Kamyoung, Apichatpong Weerasethakul
CAST Amara Ramnarong, Surachai Ningsanond, Sompop Songkampol

SCREENING **NMS**
27 OCT, TUES, 3pm | 140 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC1**
31 OCT, SAT, 10:30am | 140 mins

Ah Girl
泡泡糖女孩

Caught between her separated parents in 1990s Singapore, a curious seven-year-old is left to carry big emotions she has no language for. How much children see, and how little they can do, slowly comes into focus.

Singapore, Malaysia. 99 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language and Sexual References). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Mandarin, English
SUBTITLES English, Chinese
DIRECTOR Ang Geck Geck
PRODUCER Charlyn Ng, Wendy Lie
CAST Ong Xuan Jing, Sydney Wong, Doreen Toh, James Seah, Carrie Wong

SCREENING **GVV**
30 OCT, FRI, 6:30pm | 99 mins +Q&A

Burn
炎上

Taken in by a tribe of lost adolescents, a runaway girl finds a new existence amid freedom and despair. This explosive feature pulls no aesthetic punches, serving up the smouldering, sparkling ruins of youthful abandon in a mixed-media feast.

Japan. 103 mins. M18 (Sexual Scenes and Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2025.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Makoto Nagahisa
PRODUCER Kazunori Seki, Yasuo Suzuki
CAST Nana Mori, Aoi Yamada, Ryousuke Sota

SCREENING **GVC2**
28 OCT, WED, 5:45pm | 103 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC1**
29 OCT, THU, 4pm | 103 mins +Q&A

Elephants in the Fog
तिनीहरू

Pirati, from the ancient third-gender Kinnar community in Nepal, is torn between searching for her missing daughter and the city life she longs for with her lover.

Nepal, France, Germany, Brazil, Norway. 108 mins. M18 (Mature Theme and Sexual Scene). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Nepali
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Abinash Bikram Shah
PRODUCER Anup Poudel, Justin Pechberty, Damien Megherbi, Michael Henrichs
CAST Puspa Thing Lama, Sahab Din Miya, Jasmin Bishwokarma, Aliz Ghimire

SCREENING **GVC1**
28 OCT, WED, 6pm | 108 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC2**
30 OCT, FRI, 5:45pm | 108 mins +Q&A

Four Seasons in Java
Empat Musim Pertiwi

In this atmospheric magical realist drama, a Javanese woman is released after 20 years in prison and returns to her hometown. Her unwanted presence forces her to face the four seasons of her past and confront the village's covert powers and injustice.

Indonesia, France, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Poland. 137 mins. M18 (Sexual Violence). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Indonesian, Javanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Kamila Andini
PRODUCER Ifa Isfansyah
CAST Putri Marino, Arya Saloka, Christine Hakim

SCREENING **GVC1**
26 OCT, MON, 6:30pm | 137 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **FHRR**
27 OCT, TUES, 6pm | 137 mins +Q&A

No Good Men
Kabul Jan

In Kabul on the eve of the Taliban's return, a tenacious camerawoman's career, relationships, family and freedom are thrown into uncertainty. She must decide what is worth holding on to and what she has to leave behind.

Germany, France, Norway, Denmark, Afghanistan. 103 mins. M18 (Some Sexual References). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Dari, Pashto
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Shahrbanoo Sadat
PRODUCER Katja Adomeit
CAST Shahrbanoo Sadat, Anwar Hashimi, Liam Hussaini

SCREENING **OT**
29 OCT, THU, 9:15pm | 103 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC1**
31 OCT, SAT, 2:15pm | 103 mins +Q&A

The Burning Giants
Yak Mai

Along the Thai-Myanmar border, a mysterious illness marks Karen bodies with burns and an activist is killed for defending his village's land, all while a toxic haze spreads across western Thailand.

Thailand, France, Singapore, Netherlands. 118 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language and Disturbing Scenes). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Thai, Karen
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Phuttiphong Aroonpheng
PRODUCER Mai Meksawan, Tan Bee Thiam, Ola Byszuk, Anouk Sluizer
CAST Awat Ratanapintha, Pakapol Srirongmuang, Waywiree Ittianunkul

SCREENING **GVC1**
27 OCT, TUES, 9pm | 110 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC2**
29 OCT, THU, 9pm | 110 mins +Q&A

The Ink-Stained Hand and the Missing Thumb

Toll operators and lovers Santosh and Rajji spend their days waiting and working in decrepit booths. A tragic accident upturns their quiet lives in this magical realist love story of grief and acceptance.

India, USA, Saudi Arabia. 127 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Hindi
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Yashasvi Juyal
PRODUCER Sharib Khan, Vikas Kumar, Viraj Sikand, Bhavna Kankaria, Neha Kaul
CAST Dheeraj Kumar, Bhumika Dube, Sudarshan Juyal

SCREENING **GVC2**
27 OCT, TUES, 6pm | 127 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **OT**
29 OCT, THU, 6pm | 127 mins +Q&A

We Are Aliens
我々は宇宙

Two boys in a small Japanese town become each other's closest friend and foil. As their lives fork in adulthood, each remembers something the other never saw, carrying scars from their life experiences.

Japan, France. 117 mins. PG13 (Some Violence). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Kohei Kadowaki
PRODUCER Emmanuel-Alain Raynal, Yuuri Shimojo
CAST Ryota Bando, Amane Okayama

SCREENING **GVC4**
28 OCT, WED, 9pm | 117 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **NMS**
30 OCT, FRI, 4pm | 117 mins +Q&A

Zoom In, Zoom Out
发现之旅

A game designer searches for his missing roommate through chat logs, avatars and secondhand memory, only to discover that digital remains reveal little of another person.

China. 116 mins. PG (Scene of Intimacy). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Mandarin
SUBTITLES English, Chinese
DIRECTOR Dong Jie
PRODUCER Cao Shanshan
CAST Sunny Sun, Zhao Tian'ai

SCREENING **GVC2**
28 OCT, WED, 2:30pm | 116 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC2**
30 OCT, FRI, 9pm | 116 mins +Q&A


Elephants in the Fog

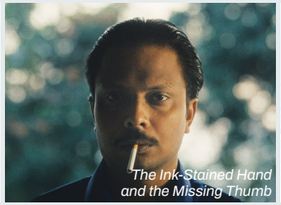

Ah Girl


Four Seasons in Java


Zoom In, Zoom Out


9 Temples to Heaven


Burn


The Ink-Stained Hand and the Missing Thumb


No Good Men


The Burning Giants


We Are Aliens

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TA 109

Southeast Asian Short Film Competition

The Southeast Asian Short Film Competition celebrates the best short cinematic gems from the region. This year's selection presents twenty-four films across five programmes.

The sheer depth and range showcased in these works attest to the abundance of creative talent found within the region. Together, these short films form a vivid tableau of Southeast Asia that is as diverse as it is inspirational.

Written by Vess Chua
Co-authored by Richard Bolisay
and Wiwat Lertwiwatwongsa

Filmmakers don't usually set out to (re)imagine "Southeast Asia." They make films from a specific culture, place and history they know intimately – their works speak to personal memory. So why, as programmers, do we choose to reframe these films within the idea of "Southeast Asia"?

One's place of birth or country of production has never been the only uniting factor. Instead, what binds us is a sustained engagement with a place, its people and the relationships that persist across distance and time. In an increasingly divided and defeated world, the Southeast Asian Short Film Competition is a bid for connection across arbitrary boundaries; through the disparate, the films come together to form larger fragments of a collective imaginary.

Since its launch in 2014, each edition has reflected the movements, making and remaking of a Southeast Asian landscape. This year, the five programmes in the competition provide a snapshot of the region and its peoples reckoning with what they have inherited, questioning the truths they have been taught.

Southeast Asia has always been shaped by flux. One may be driven away by political turmoil, or by strains of dissatisfaction whose stirrings eventually reach a breaking point. Those who leave continue to carry with them ties and memories of their homeland; ironically, those who choose to come home struggle to reconnect with a place and people that may have changed drastically. "There and Back Again" speaks to these stories in which leaving is never straightforward and returning is no easier.

So, what can we do when confronted with the inevitable change? In "The Forest Remembers," what is buried to build the present becomes a silent cry seeking to be heard. Here, Southeast Asia's long entanglement with the forest is expressed in myths, legends and the mysterious – a haunting reminder of the region's rich histories we may have forgotten or taken at face value.

"Pervasive Powers" alludes to powers that intensify at a relentless pace, coercion gathering momentum quietly – insidious and unseen, yet deeply felt. Try explaining a slight but constant ringing in your ears which only you can hear. It's impossible to describe the gravity of what seems to only be affecting you. Yet when spoken about collectively, it crescendos to a revelation that perhaps others can hear too.

Each of these twenty-four films rings in a different frequency, but when gathered, they become a signal we can no longer ignore. We scream, we shout, we cry, we run, we dance, we mourn. The films in "Rage Against," in particular, challenge the legacies of the inherited status quo. They express cracks in the illusion we have been told not to question.

Cinema offers us views of truths yet also allows us to understand that truth is never universal. Increasingly, short films are turning this scrutiny on itself: tropes, the fourth wall, and the frame are laid bare – so that the viewer, too, sees how an image is constructed. By complicating the boundaries between performance and truth, "Surfaces and Slippages" reveals the hidden and the unsaid between friends, lovers and our histories at large.

This year alone, we received over a thousand short film submissions across the eleven Southeast Asian countries. What is clear among the new crop of films each year is the undying power of cinema to tell stories that transcend language and borders through continually inventive forms. Each film contains a slice of humanity, a world unto itself. Much like how films build shots into scenes and then sequences, programming these twenty-four films is to find new ways to trace the lines that run inherently between them, rather than force a picture. What emerges, then, is less an attempt to map "Southeast Asia" but to suggest new ways of seeing it in these times.

Rage Against 79 min, M18

PROGRAMME 1

In a punishing climate, we run, shout, fight, dance our way to stave off an unbearable reality and stay alive.

Singapore God

To get to work, a man sprints through a city where mundane panic and disaster collapse into one frozen moment.

Singapore. 10 mins. NC16 (Some Nudity).World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Exyl PRODUCER Exyl CAST Jonni Pepper-Golions, Ryan Benjamin Lee

Flame of the Forest
காட்டின் சூடர்

After a quick taste of freedom, a young nurse arrives home and gets blamed for her grandmother's death.

Malaysia. 15 mins. PG13 (Sexual References). World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Tamil SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Krityishaa Karunagaran
PRODUCER Indiran Shanmugam, Mary Grace Liew CAST Sarah Lingam, Rajam Kaliyappan, Logan

Blue Days
Những ngày xanh thẳm

Beaten by bullies in the schoolyard, a young man finds refuge in an abandoned house and in his lover's promise of escape.

Vietnam, South Korea. 20 mins. M18 (Some Homosexual Content). World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Vietnamese SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Vũ Trung Đức PRODUCER Phạm Thu Vân CAST Nguyễn Minh Đức, Nguyễn Chí Thức

Nien
念

Between dream and remembrance, two drifters move through a decaying world in search of a vision that may never have existed, where only the quiet ache of forgetting remains.

Singapore. 14 mins. PG13 (Some Mature Content). World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Mandarin SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Pek Jia Hao, Ang Jia Jun
PRODUCER Clyde Kam, Pek Jia Hao, Ang Jia Jun CAST Brandon Ang, Melvin Han

Kara: The Burning Woman
Si Kara: Ang Babaye nga Nagdaba-daba

Amid killings in the Negros Island countryside, residents develop deadly antibodies that render their secretions fatal to outsiders, while a woman in the city of Bacolod experiences an extreme rise in body temperature.

Philippines. 20 mins. PG13 (Some Mature Content). International Premiere. 2025.
LANGUAGE Filipino, Hiligaynon SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Dale PRODUCER JT Trinidad, Franz Louie Domasian
CAST Emerald Romero, Milton Dionzon

SUPPORTED BY:

FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

SCREENING **GVC1**
28 OCT, WED, 9:15pm | 79 mins +Q&A


Nien


Kara: The Burning Woman


Flame of the Forest


Blue Days


Singapore God

The Forest Remembers
98 min, NC16

PROGRAMME 2

Tucked away in the depths of the forest lies a quiet stirring, a soft tune sung against the violence in the present, begging to be heard, remembered.

A Tree

When urban development desecrates a sacred tree, a foreman silences the inexplicable afflictions that have taken hold of a migrant worker, only to dig up histories that refuse to be buried.

Singapore. 9 mins. PG 13 (Some Disturbing Scenes). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE No Dialogue SUBTITLES — DIRECTOR Mark Wee PRODUCER Jia Lee CAST —

Incident on the Mountain
Oupatevak het tam phnom

A mysterious helicopter crash buried deep in the mountains brings together a journalist and a soldier to make sense of a fragmented, garbled history.

Cambodia. 21 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Khmer SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Savunthara Seng PRODUCER Davy Chou, Daniel Mattes, Danech San CAST Reach Pich, Vankosal Keo, Vollak Kong

Golden Island
Kota emas

Two videographers, one from Java and the other from Papua, make a film together about Papua. They reflect upon the beautiful images of the island and discuss its ironic reality under the Javanese people.

Indonesia, Singapore. 22 mins. NC16 (Brief Nudity). Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Papuan Language, Javanese, Indonesian SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Arief Budiman PRODUCER Rugun Sirait CAST Fransisco Edwardo Kamisopa, Muhammad Dzulqarnain, Arief Budiman

They Made Monsters

Joaquin has been raised by his monster-hunting father to kill. But when he hears the eerily humanlike cries of a captured creature, Joaquin begins to question where the true horror lies.

Philippines. 16 mins. PG13 (Some Violence). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Tagalog SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Jaime Morados PRODUCER Teri Malvar CAST Santino Santiago, Cedrick Juan, Robert Joshua San Luis

SUPPORTED BY:

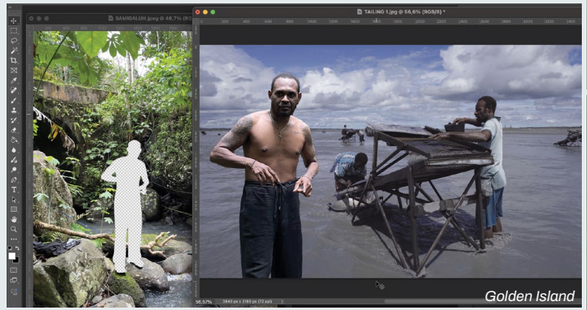
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Habitare
แลิม

Thailand. 30 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2025. LANGUAGE Thai, Burmese SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Tanatat Khuttapan PRODUCER Punnachat Virattanapornkul CAST Kannipakran Jongjamnian, Kyaw Ye Naing

SCREENING **GVC2**
29 OCT, THU, 6pm | 98 mins +Q&A


A Tree


Golden Island


They Made Monsters


Incident on the Mountain


Habitare

Pervasive Powers
80 min, R21

PROGRAMME 3

In its most oppressive forms, power rarely announces itself. What are the inconspicuous structures that determine who gets to speak and who must obey?

RIP ME, LOL

After a leaked sex tape drives her to suicide, Megan returns as a vengeful ghost haunting the men who wronged her.

Singapore. 16 mins. R21 (Sexual Scenes). World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Mandarin, English
SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Calleen Koh
PRODUCER Tan Si En, Wendy Lie
CAST Iris Li, Yeo Yann Yann, Benjamin Kheng

The Bovine Comedy
ค.ยังคงยืนเด่นโดดท้าทาย

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In 2036, cows are nearly extinct. Phop owns Southeast Asia's last bull, but it is getting old. He employs Jon, the only person who can extract semen from it, and finds himself drawn to Jon's hands.

France. 25 mins. R21 (Sexual Scenes). Singapore Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Thai SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Ratchapoom Boonbunchachoke
PRODUCER Lucas Sénécaut, Jack Atmore
CAST Pakapol Srirongmuang, Sadanont Durongkavarojana, Wachara Kanha

Through the Cracks
Lạch Cạch

Plagued by a persistent rattling noise inside his head, a soon-to-be bridegroom desperately searches for its source and discovers an irrepressible truth.

Vietnam. 14 mins. PG13 (Some Mature Content). World Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Vietnamese SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Lê Hoàng PRODUCER Lê Hoàng
CAST Nguyễn Sỹ Hậu, Đào Duy Bảo Định, Trần Thiên Tú

Local Sensations
โลคอลเซนเซชันส์

Weaving glassblowing, nature walks, and a mock guide to monument design, *Local Sensations* is a dark satire on Thai society's compulsion to sanctify everything it fears to question.

Thailand. 25 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2025. LANGUAGE Thai
SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Tulapop Saenjaroen PRODUCER Kardpol Nitipisanon CAST Sippakorn Aotrakul, Ham Tanid, Kantida Busaba

SCREENING **GVC1**
30 OCT, FRI, 9:15pm | 80 mins +Q&A


Local Sensations


RIP ME, LOL


Through the Cracks


The Bovine Comedy

Surfaces and Slippages
95 min, R21

PROGRAMME 4

Images disguise truths and meanings slip through cracks of performance in fascinating ways. Surfaces break gently, little by little, revealing what lies underneath.

Macho Mystic Meltdown Chapter 2: Monster; She Wrote

Alone and isolated in a remote region of Indonesia during the early 1960s, a female Permesta fighter performs military drills and prepares for a Minahasan ancestral ritual.

Indonesia. 13 mins. PG13. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Minahasan, English, Indonesian SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Natasha Tontey PRODUCER Natasha Tontey, Rizky Firliansyah Agusta CAST Asmara Abigail

Tropenkolder

Weary railway workers resist colonial labour through intentional slowness and refusal. As they disrupt a system built on constant movement, idleness becomes a subtle act of sabotage.

Indonesia, Netherlands. 24 mins. NC16 (Some Drug Use and Coarse Language). International Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Indonesian, Javanese SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Riar Rizaldi PRODUCER B.M. Anggana CAST Uji Hahan Handoko, Elia Nurvista, Gintani Swastika, Syafiatudina, Wok the Rock

Shadows
ស្រមោល

What begins as rehearsal becomes revelation when two young women discover that performance can reveal truths the script never intended.

Cambodia. 17 mins. M18 (Some Homosexual Content). Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Khmer SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Sreileak Prum PRODUCER Danech San CAST Sokuntheary Ty, Sreychhnas Mao, Sreylin Meas, Reaksmey An

She Said
她说

On the day she is proposed to, a woman recounts her past in a scam compound. The vulnerability of her story blurs the line between memory, truth and reality.

Singapore. 22 mins. NC16 (Some Sexual References). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Mandarin SUBTITLES English, Chinese DIRECTOR Ivan Tan PRODUCER Anthony Chen, Teoh Yi Peng CAST Fan Bingbing, Zhang Yu, Liang Ming

What Do You Seek in the Dark?
หาอะไร?

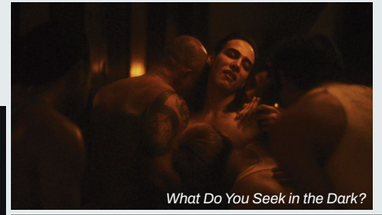
Loneliness draws a young man to a derelict cinema that was once a haunt for cruising men. Seeking release, he finds the cinema awakening, watching and luring him with an insisting gaze.

Thailand. 19 mins. R21 (Homosexual Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Thai SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Tossaphon Riantong PRODUCER Maenum Chagasik,Thapanee Loosuwan, Pierre-Yves Bezat CAST Johnparot Wongthes, Thananchakorn Kamolhirankul

SCREENING **GVC2**
31 OCT, SAT, 2pm | 95 mins +Q&A


Shadows


She Said


What Do You Seek in the Dark?


Macho Mystic Meltdown Chapter 2: Monster; She Wrote


Tropenkolder

There and Back Again 111 min, NC16

PROGRAMME 5

The homeland is remembered and remembers, while those who return confront a present that feels familiar yet distant.

SCREENING **GVC2**
31 OCT, SAT, 5pm | 111 mins +Q&A

The Fever
Cơn Sốt

Returning home after years abroad, a man finds that the locals are now consumed by a desire to leave. As a feverish contagion of unnamed dread spreads among them, young people mysteriously vanish.

Vietnam, Germany. 20 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Vietnamese SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Thanh-Giang Nguyen PRODUCER Thanh-Giang Nguyen CAST Phạm Thanh Hải, Hồng Ma

A Gentle Breeze
အတိုးဆုံးလေညှင်း

Returning from his uncle's funeral, a boy becomes curious about his parents and life at home in Bagan.

Myanmar. 24 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Burmese SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Lin Htet Aung PRODUCER Lamin Oo, San Yae Aye CAST Thant Zin Oo, Zaw Hein, Ma Yi, Tun Aye

Surface Tension

SUPPORTED BY:

FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

Young swimmer Bulet returns to her hometown to attend a cousin's wedding. Overwhelmed by grief and heartbreak, she tries to keep her head above water.

Philippines. 17 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2025. LANGUAGE Tagalog SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Gabriela Serrano, Mariana Serrano PRODUCER Gabriela Serrano, Mariana Serrano CAST Mariana Serrano, Giro Alva, Audrey Alquiroz

Ashes and Echoes
สุญญกาลวิมานหมอก

Three interlinked stories about societal expectations: a father preparing his young son for conscription, two soldiers sharing intimate moments in a forest, and the filmmaker's parents speaking about his childhood.

Thailand. 25 mins. NC16 (Some Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Thai SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Koraphat Cheeradit PRODUCER Warat Bureephakdee CAST Kittithach Thongthiem, Gandhi Wasuvitchayagit, Boonsong Nakphoo

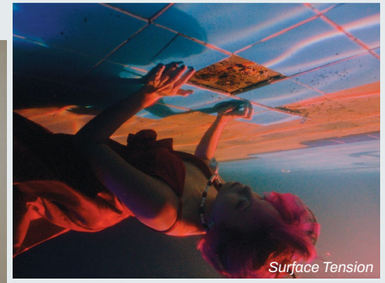
"Vaterland" or A Bule Named Yanto
"Vaterland" oder Ein Bule Namens Yanto

Reuniting with his sister in Yogyakarta, Yanto, a German-Indonesian, or *bule*, finds that she belongs effortlessly there. As envy and dissonance surface, his journey becomes a bittersweet exploration of his mixed-raced identity.

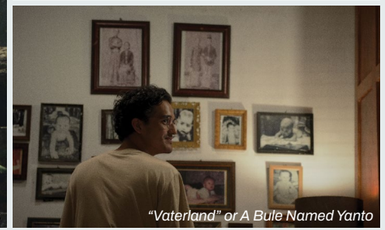
Germany, Indonesia. 25 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE German, Indonesian, Javanese, English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Berthold Wahjudi PRODUCER Jonas Egert, Sylvain Cruiziat CAST Aggai Saibuma, Sarah Muckarin Röser


The Fever


Ashes and Echoes


Surface Tension


A Gentle Breeze


"Vaterland" or A Bule Named Yanto

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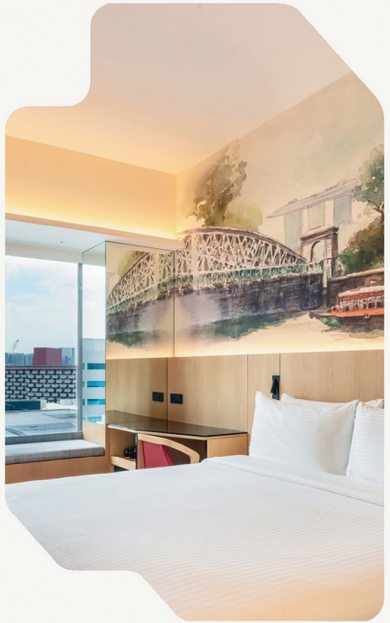
Whether it's a quick pre-screening bite or a post-film wind down, head to TASTE Restaurant and LeBar for hearty local flavours and refreshing drinks. Experience a space where every conversation flows as freely as the inspiration around you.

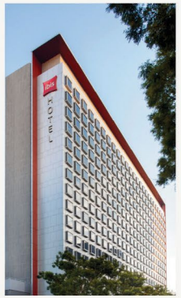
As stories unfold on screen, let ibis Singapore on Bencoolen be the place where they rest between scenes.

Scan to Learn More

More Information

When: 21 October - 1 November 2026
Where: 170 Bencoolen Street, Singapore 189657
Nearest MRT: Bencoolen, Bugis & Rochor










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Singapore Panorama

With its unwavering focus on local cinema, Singapore Panorama is dedicated to presenting the latest films from Singapore filmmakers across various stages of their careers.

This year's selection sees sixteen short films across three programmes. By addressing evolving societal concerns and reinvigorating time-honoured themes in original ways, they broaden our view of what Singaporean cinema can be.

Written by Vess Chua

This year, Singapore Panorama turns eighteen. Introduced in 2008, with the exception of a brief social withdrawal in 2012 and 2013, the section has spent nearly two decades tracing the trajectory of Singaporean cinema. In most cultures, one's eighteenth year marks a passage where childhood recedes while stepping tentatively into young adulthood.

Do you remember how you were when you were eighteen? Or, if you're one of our younger audiences, do you have a vision of what it might be like at that age? I remember a particular boldness, where it genuinely felt like I could do anything – swimming in a world of possibilities. Panorama channels this same strength and restive spirit.

For the 37th edition of the Singapore International Film Festival, Singapore Panorama spends its coming-of-age doing what most eighteen-year-olds do: figuring out where they are in life by asking, "Now what?" And, of course, Singapore Panorama is still firmly in a state of becoming.

There is a quiet unrest that lives within it. It is easy to position Panorama as a bird's-eye view of what Singaporean filmmakers are making and *how* they are making it. But if we drill down to the core of Panorama, what will we find? Not a single definition nor a centre, but perhaps a constellation of restless impulses slowly unravelling, finding itself. Yet what has held true throughout practically the Panorama's entire teenaged existence is its function as a reflection of local syndromes and quirks, through cinematic means. The three programmes this year are no different.

Filmmakers interrogate "Borders / Barriers," questioning the watchful eyes in a panopticon of surveillance and self-policing. The harsh gaze that falls on queer lives, and the judgemental gaze that turns away from the families with someone on death row – these are challenged, questioned and returned to the forefront.

"There's Gotta Be More" – we shout our suspicions about the standard-issue Singaporean life trajectory: grinding away in a stable 9-5, and taking the relationship elevator via the Build-to-Order flat-to-marriage pipeline, while contending with fears of falling behind our peers in life. What if this is something we can actually opt out of, and that not adhering to societal expectations in these narrow terms is not failure at all?

If ever we feel like it's too late for change, "Second Life, Second Skin" overturns the sunk-cost fallacy. Here, a coming-of-age awakens revelation after revelation, paving the way for transformation. If today feels like yesterday, day after day, these films remind us that we can do better to seek an alternative path to live life anew.

Across the films presented this year under the Singapore Panorama banner lies a boldness – in form, production and the stories told. Year after year, it is striking how more filmmakers are turning to dialogue-heavy, small-budget productions with minimal crew. Where splashy, excessive styles are often prioritised, the quiet but formally inventive may be neglected.

In this vein, returning to Singapore Panorama this year is filmmaker Seth Cheong, who premiered *Dogma 65* in Panorama last year and then went on to screen the film at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. This resourcefulness also extends into genre and animation, where filmmakers stretch the frame in a different direction, leaning into the fantastical, the stylised, and mixed-media animation to tell stories that live-action alone might not be able to hold.

My birthday wish for Singapore Panorama is that it will retain its intrepid spirit, its refusal to be boxed in, and see continued growth. May its spark never be dulled and may we always carry some of the wildness that a confident teenager possesses. Happy eighteenth birthday, Singapore Panorama, long live.

There's Gotta Be More
86 min, NC16

PROGRAMME 1

The stuffy 9-to-5, the BTO ballot, the slow ride up the life escalator we don't even remember stepping onto. We do the things we're meant to do, until one day we notice a crack, a signal that perhaps there's more to life than this.

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

SCREENING **FHRR**
23 OCT, FRI, 6:30pm | 86 mins +Q&A

Everything's Peachy

Pipa, a kitchen hand, lands her dream job working for a head chef whom she greatly admires. But the facades crack when she discovers a grisly secret.

Singapore. 8 mins. NC16 (Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Nah Yee Chern PRODUCER Nah Yee Chern, Belyta Yip, Katherine Lee CAST Maylinne Reyes Hennessy, Marlon Dance-Hooi, Griffin Puatu

It's Not Sweet

Eleven-year-old Hong and his sister are only allowed to eat watermelon the day before his birthday buffet—a family tradition that is increasingly difficult to uphold amid strife.

Singapore. 12 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Mandarin SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Cheryl Wong PRODUCER Sam Chua Weishi, Macarius Chia CAST Nicholas Lim Tao Rui, Charlotte Yue Qian Le, Liew Li Ting Trissie

Adrift / A Rift

An omniscient voice narrates the dissolution of a relationship against a montage of faceless malaise set in a beach resort.

Singapore. 10 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Enze Kay PRODUCER Seth Cheong, Maximilian Liang CAST Casandra Kate Nicholas, Enze Kay

Daphne as Woman (Crying)

Daphne joins an audition hoping to revive her acting career. But when a casting assistant pushes her beyond reasonable limits, the session turns confessional, revealing ugly truths about the industry.

Singapore. 14 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Mandarin SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Maximilian Liang PRODUCER Maximilian Liang, Seth Cheong CAST Nathanael Khoo, Debra Teng, Koo Chia Meng

Low-Hanging Fruit

A trans woman discovers a mysterious pair of artefacts and tries to sell them on the black market, hoping to escape her past. Meanwhile, a consciousness waits for a body to inhabit.

Singapore. 19 mins. PG13 (Scene of Intimacy). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Chong Lii PRODUCER Sam Chua Weishi CAST Justine Seng, Fatin Zulkefly, Kelvin Ho, Violet Oon

Singaporeans at Gyeong-bokgung Palace

Standing at Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul, a filmmaker sardonically imagines the conversations of the crowd as if they were Singaporean.

Singapore. 8mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Seth Cheong PRODUCER Maximilian Liang, Enze Kay CAST —

Coast to Coast

An overworked Singaporean bureaucrat sent to fix the office printer finds the errand spiralling into a surreal odyssey across the island.

Singapore. 15mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Megan Lim En PRODUCER Megan Lim En CAST Lekheraj Sekhar, Edward Tan, Mia Lim Rei



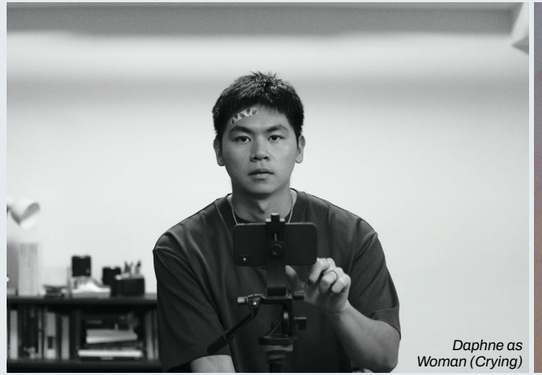
Adrift / A Rift



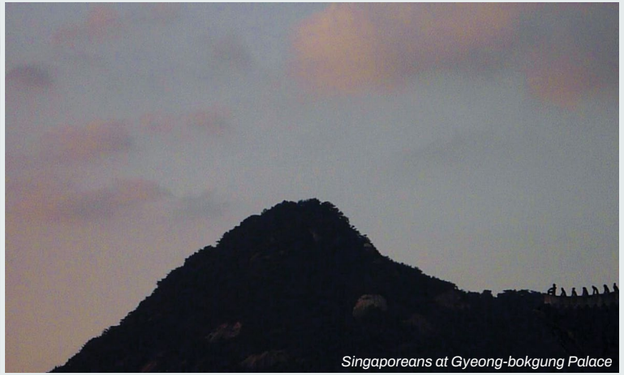
Coast to Coast



Everything's Peachy



Daphne as Woman (Crying)



Singaporeans at Gyeong-bokgung Palace



It's Not Sweet



Low-Hanging Fruit

Second Life, Second Skin
58 min, M18

PROGRAMME 2

As the world closes in on us like a dark, hard shell, the old self comes undone. These films send us into the unknown, awakening endless possibilities or the end of things as we know it.

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Kiss Me Climax

When the latest chapter of her favourite manga leaves Angel feeling hot and heavy, she dips into her imagination in search of sweet relief.

Singapore. 5 mins. M18 (Sexual References). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2025. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Shara Tay PRODUCER Shara Tay CAST Charon Chong

Subterranea
換骨

While a teenage girl feels utterly trapped in ennui, the magic of Singapore's natural world begins to rumble, threatening to break the levee.

Singapore. 14 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Mandarin SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Ash Goh Hua PRODUCER Joel Neo, Javier Lim CAST Iris Li, Lim Shi-An, Doreen Toh

REANIMATOR

After a filmmaker revisits a core childhood memory that sparked his fear of bugs, he decides to taxidermise a dead bee, giving his fear a creative outlet.

Singapore. 6 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Syahmi Iman PRODUCER Syahmi Iman CAST Syahmi Iman

Orang Minyak

Rayyan reluctantly spends his 16th birthday at the beach. When he suddenly finds oil stains on his body, he becomes convinced that a mysterious entity is stalking him.

Singapore. 18 mins. NC16 (Some Coarse Language). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Malay, English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Leon Cheo PRODUCER Karl Gan, Goh Ming Siu, Leon Cheo CAST Ayden Farish, Suhaillah Salam, Fir Rahman

Encik

Implicated in a young serviceman's death, an army warrant officer finds himself questioning the very institution that has defined him most of his life.

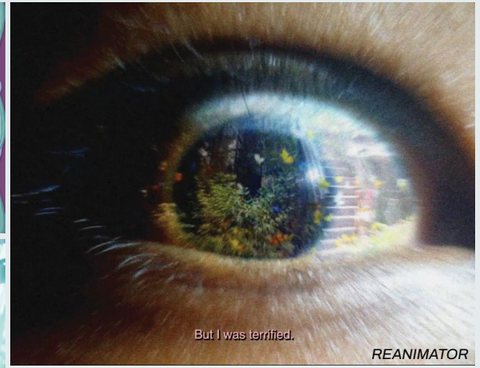
Singapore. 15 mins. NC16 (Some Mature Content). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Chinese, Malay SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Ewan Leong PRODUCER Megan Chew, Ewan Leong, Prudence Goh CAST Fish Chaar, Ava Gia Salamat

SCREENING **FHRR**
24 OCT, SAT, 7pm | 58 mins +Q&A


Kiss Me Climax


Orang Minyak


Subterranea



REANIMATOR


Encik

Borders / Barriers
82 min, R21

PROGRAMME 3

Watching the waves crash against a long spine of stone, we wonder whether the seawall is keeping us safe, or keeping us from certain truths we'd rather not let in.

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Son Of A

When a Vietnamese child mysteriously shows up at James and his father's hawker stall, the two men handle the situation differently, with the child's fate hanging in the balance.

Singapore. 19 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Hokkien, Cantonese, Vietnamese SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Jacob Tan PRODUCER Chan Chee Yin, Jacob Tan, John Ryan Yeo CAST Chan Tai Heng, Benedict Seah, Adrian Toh

Dazing Gaze

A Grindr match sends two men from Singapore across the border for a night away from prying eyes—but something shifts as their gaze turns inwards onto themselves.

Singapore, Malaysia. 17 mins. R21 (Homosexual Theme). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Daryl Cheong PRODUCER Daryl Cheong, Rafy Michael CAST Kenneth J Lim, Kay Enze, Darryl Tyz

Her Silence
她的沉默

When the parents of an international student visit her in Sydney, she contends with her mother's quiet disapproval of her life there. Familial tensions are wrapped in reticence and slight gestures in this family drama.

Singapore, Australia. 17 mins. PG. Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Mandarin, English SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Lionel Seah PRODUCER Bryan Huang CAST Doreen Toh, Iris Li, Gary Young

What Remains at Dawn
清晨之後

In Singapore, executions happen at dawn. Across a decade of border crossings, appeals and silence, two sisters fight to save their brother as he writes poetry from death row.

Taiwan, Singapore. 29 mins. R21 (Mature Content). World Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE English, Malay, Tamil SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Nicholas Tan PRODUCER Daryl Cheong CAST —

SCREENING **FHRR**
25 OCT, SUN, 1:30pm | 82 mins +Q&A



Son Of A


Dazing Gaze


What Remains at Dawn


Her Silence

A PINNACLE ON EVERY TABLE

We take on our events with a passionate heart and spirit of excellence. Whether you are planning to host an intimate dinner or a large-scale catering event, our menus are crafted in-house to relect the elegance and diversity of Eastern and Western cuisines.

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Junior Explorers

Junior Explorers serves as an entry point for young audiences to take their earliest steps in their cinematic journeys. Every new encounter is an opportunity for growth, especially for a child.

Featuring relaxed, sensory-friendly screenings for selected films, these three tales of familial connection are guided by the instinct for discovery, inviting us to wander through each adventure with childlike wonder.

Official Patron: Shopee

Written by Ryan Pagdanganan
Co-authored by Thong Kay Wee

In 2023, at SGIFF Family Film Day, families across generations came together at Our Tampines Hub to experience the magic of cinema in this one-off community event. Building on that spirit, SGIFF is thrilled to introduce Junior Explorers – a brand-new section within the main festival specially catered to young audiences aged five and up.

Designed to welcome children taking their first steps into film appreciation, Junior Explorers offers the option of relaxed screenings: sensory-friendly environments where audiences have the freedom to move and explore without the constraints of a traditional cinema setting.

A child's first encounter with anything new – places, faces, narratives – begins with simple curiosity. The films in Junior Explorers are drawn from all corners of the world, reflecting the shifting dynamics within families and celebrating difference as something to embrace rather than hide.

In Chilean director Gabriel Osorio Vargas's *Brave Cat*, a teenage forest cat, Kona, goes on a cross-country search for her mother who has been abducted. Travelling alongside an aging circus bear and an abandoned guard dog, Kona's personal journey is mirrored in the experiences of her companions: the trio bond over their struggles with the loss of family and the hope of reuniting with their loved ones. With *Brave Cat*, this hand-crafted animated adventure gently trusts young viewers with a story equal parts grief, hope and resilience.

Julián, director Louise Bagnall's feature debut, centres on seven-year-old Julián, who spends a summer in Brooklyn with a grandmother he barely knows. He is enamoured by a city teeming with stories and her Caribbean heritage, but Julián's real discovery is not of a new place but of himself. Brought to life by Bagnall's charming hand-drawn animation, the film speaks to the quiet bravery of listening to one's own heart.

The latest from Japanese director Ryo Takebayashi, *The Invisibles*, rounds off the selection with a family road trip. Having spent years hiding his invisible daughter, Hikari, from the world out of love and fear, a father is encouraged by his three daughters to leave their island home to visit their grandmother in Tokyo. What unfolds is a mix of family comedy and meaningful moments of reflection. The film's fantastical premise creatively evokes the universal desire to be seen, which both children and parents can resonate with.

Though Junior Explorers is the newest section, it brings our youngest audiences the same richness and care seen across the festival. Through the characters of Kona, Julián and Hikari, we learn that every act of exploration is also a means of connection, to falter is not to fail. We hope that the slate of films will delight and inspire children to pay attention not only to the world around them, but also to what is within themselves.



Opening Film

Brave Cat
Una Gata Valiente

Chile. 92 mins. PG. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Gabriel Osorio Vargas
PRODUCER Pato Escala
CAST Navah Lisman, Dana Spejh, Chris Jahn
RELAXED SCREENING + ACTIVITY **NMS**
25 OCT, SUN, 10:30am | 92 mins
SCREENING **GVB7**
1 NOV, SUN, 4:30pm | 92 mins

Animals have been disappearing from the forest, kidnapped by the human—a giant monster who forces them to join his circus. Years after witnessing her mother's abduction by the human's guard dogs, Kona, a young cat, gathers the courage to search for her.

Traversing woodland and glaciers, venturing all the way out to sea, Kona embarks on a transformative journey accompanied by Colin, a puppy abandoned by the guard dogs due to his disability, and Bernard, a plucky big bear who repeatedly escapes from the circus. Chased by the guard dogs and faced with the challenge of navigating unfamiliar environments, they bond over their shared hope of reuniting with lost family.

In this uplifting adventure, friendship fosters the strength to stand together and put an end to terror. Filled with wonder and heart, *Brave Cat* is a richly textured work of animation that tells an empathetic story about loss and forgiveness, reflecting imaginatively upon the universal theme of human rights.

Julián

New kid on the block Julián spends the summer with his grandmother and discovers the magic of the ocean when he decides to dress up for the Coney Island Mermaid Parade.

Ireland, Luxembourg, Canada, Denmark. 85 mins. PG. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Louise Bagnall
PRODUCER Tomm Moore, Paul Young, Nora Twomey, Anthony Leo, Andrew Rosen, Lewis Taylor, Charlotte de la Gournerie, Fabien Renelli, Stephan Roelants
CAST Knyght Darius Jack, Milcania Diaz-Rojas, Lisa-Kaindé Diaz, Naomi Diaz

RELAXED SCREENING + ACTIVITY **NMS**
25 OCT, SUN, 4:30pm | 85 mins

SCREENING **GVB5**
1 NOV, SUN, 10:30am | 85 mins

The Invisibles
見えない娘

Misadventures ensue as a protective single father and his three daughters—the youngest of whom is invisible—venture from their secluded life on a quiet island to Tokyo to meet the girls' estranged grandmother, a famous actress who has taken ill.

Japan. 110 mins. PG13 (Some Frightening Scenes). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Ryo Takebayashi
PRODUCER Chiaru Nagai, Daisuke Noro, Fumika Fukuda
CAST Katsuya Maiguma, Suzuki Rinko, Hana Kondo, Hana Yayama

SCREENING **GVB5**
31 OCT, SAT, 4:30pm


Julián


The Invisibles



The 19th edition of Perspectives Film Festival: Breakthroughs in Cinema presents *UNDER THE HOOD - Automobility in Cinema.*

The automobile is one of the most ubiquitous inventions of the modern era. Its emergence, alongside cinema, has transformed modern life and redefined our relationship with time, space and people, paving new ground for cinematic storytelling. Across cultures and genres, movies imbue the automobile with character and meaning; it can be a sanctuary, a prison, a companion, a weapon, or the only place your dad has ever said anything real.

Take a joyride with us through George Miller's *Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior* (1981), Bi Gan's *Kaili Blues* (2015), a 4K restoration of David Cronenberg's *Crash* (1996), *The Wages of Fear* (1953), *Luna Papa* (1999), *Perfumed Nightmare* (1977) and the Singapore Premiere of a 2026 Cannes title, *Summer Drift*.

Scan the QR code to learn more and secure a seat at Perspectives Film Festival 2026. Fasten your seatbelts, it's going to be a bumpy ride!

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BREAKTHROUGHS IN CINEMA

NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY SINGAPORE

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information
College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences

Standpoint

In Standpoint, the personal and the sociopolitical are intertwined in profoundly compelling ways. These seven films plunge into today's most pressing debates alongside deeply intimate struggles, confronting each subject through an uncompromising lens.

Stylistically distinct and emotionally resonant, these works challenge audiences to stand up to uncomfortable truths, sparking debate and offering fresh perspectives long after the credits roll.

Written by Hsieh I-hsuan
Co-authored by Sam I-shan, Thong Kay Wee and Wiwat Lertwiwatwongsa

We are living through an age of image overload. Images of war, disaster, political violence and ecological collapse flood our screens alongside an ever-expanding stream of AI-generated images, all competing for the same finite resource: our attention. Together, they shape what we believe to be real. When so much is made visible, circulated and consumed, how do we remain attentive to realities so that they are not reduced to mere headlines or images? The seven films in this programme approach these questions from different points of entry. What connects them is not a shared definition of truth, but an insistence on looking closely and giving reality the room it needs to remain complex and resonant.

Opening the programme, *Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava* enters this space at its most intimate: a filmmaker looking back on his coming out and the family that has grown around it. Family footage reveals unexpected histories of his mother and sister, allowing generations and forms of vulnerability to coexist. The film's tenderness lies in its refusal to make queerness synonymous with suffering. There is pain, certainly, but also humour, pride, confidence and an unapologetic sense of being alive. At its heart is a belief in connection, not as a resolution to conflict, but as something that can endure fear, uncertainty and the difficulty of understanding what once felt unfamiliar. Its radical gesture is this refusal to ask queer people to justify their existence through trauma.

In *Rehearsals for a Revolution*, the personal becomes a way of approaching more than four decades of Iranian history. Collectively, home videos, photographs, newsreels, recordings and narration resist an authoritative account of the past, allowing history to be retold through private memories. Rather than being confined to the public sphere, revolution and repression seep into kitchens, classrooms, relationships and childhood. The film's "rehearsal" of remembering shows how history is embodied in ordinary lives.

What appears to be a simple act of documenting, the story of *32 Meters* is in fact shaped by encounters between the filmmaker and the people being filmed. Its fluid storytelling makes this collaborative process almost seamless, and this is part of its magic: rather than treating reality as raw material waiting to be captured, the film shows how creation is arrived at through relationships.

But that filmmaker-subject relationship is never innocent. In *Amazomania*, it is charged with the history of colonialism and its violence towards those cast as the "other": entering unfamiliar territories, turning Indigenous people into objects of discovery, and claiming the authority to tell their stories. What begins as an expedition into the rainforest gradually exposes the conventions of the Western explorer narrative. What does collaboration mean when the camera arrives carrying centuries of colonial power? Who owns the images? Decolonising the image also means questioning who controls the camera, the archive, the edit and the story.

If *Amazomania* asks who has the right to make images, *Gaza's Twins*, *Come Back to Me* explores what it means to keep looking at images that feel familiar. While the ongoing violence in Gaza is undeniable – often perceived through headlines and images – the film finds resilience and tenderness in everyday life even amid destruction. Rather than reduce Palestinians to symbols of catastrophe, it shows them continuing to live, care, mourn and hope. In doing so, the film confronts not only violence but the exhaustion of witnessing – the temptation to look away because we have seen too much.

Time offers another form of resistance in *Mariinka*. Set in an eastern Ukrainian town shaped by more than a decade of war, the film follows young people whose identities, relationships and loyalties have been transformed by conflict. Cinema is an art of time, and this film allows us to feel what time can do: how years deepen a story and allow lives to accumulate histories. But as time passes, the world's attention begins to shift even though the war in Ukraine rages on – our attention may be fading, but reality itself isn't.

Prosecution brings us to contemporary Germany, where a Korean-German woman confronts racism, as well as gendered discrimination and violence. Her everyday experience unfolds against the backdrop of a global resurgence of the far right and the return of fascist ideas, making the personal inseparable from the wider political climate.

This programme invites us to look closely at the realities around us, to listen beyond first impressions and to stay a little longer – maybe the length of a film. Cinema's value may lie simply in making room for attention: to linger where the news cycle asks us to move on, and to remain with lives that resist becoming symbols. In a world where reality is not only framed but endlessly circulated and consumed, perhaps what matters is to give people and their stories enough of our time so that they become more than an image.



Opening Film

Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava

Em bé đồng bóng, em bé ngạo nghễ và em bé đau lòng

Vietnam, South Korea. 105 mins.
R21 (Homosexual Content).
Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Vietnamese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Nông Nhật Quang
PRODUCER Trang Đào, Sarah Kang, Oh Hee-jung
CAST —

SCREENING **GVC1**
22 OCT, THU, 6pm | 105 mins +Q&A
SCREENING **FHRR**
25 OCT, SUN, 4:15pm | 105 mins +Q&A

Long-buried tensions, unspoken identities and unresolved love have shaped filmmaker Nông Nhật Quang's family for years. When a new chapter in his older sister Mai's life begins, the fragile balance that has held the family together starts to shift, prompting Quang to turn the camera towards his kin.

Believing that filmmaking can open conversations where words have failed, Quang retraces his changing bond with Mai, reflects on his own journey as a gay son, and gently navigates the fraught relationship between his mother and sister. Intimate and deeply compassionate, *Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava* invites audiences into a Vietnamese family who are learning to give voice to years of silence.

The film assembles family photographs, diaries, phone recordings and home videos into a vibrant first-person documentary where memories collide with the present. With candid observation, sharp humour and queer exuberance, Quang embraces the camera not as a tool of objectivity but as a way of speaking to his loved ones. An emerging voice in Vietnamese queer cinema, he captures a generation negotiating greater LGBTQ+ visibility in a society where the hardest conversations still begin at home.

32 Meters

In central Anatolia, a woman shares her love of competitive shooting with her friends. While training begins in earnest for an upcoming competition, they face continued dismissal by the men in their community and are subject to demeaning limitations.

Turkey. 83 mins. PG. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2025.

LANGUAGE Turkish
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Morteza Atabaki
PRODUCER Morteza Atabaki, Murat Ones
CAST Halime Sandal, Gonul Uğur

SCREENING **OT**
30 OCT, FRI, 6:15pm | 83 mins

Amazomania

A 1996 expedition to the Amazon rainforest to make contact with the Korubo people yields huge professional success for journalist Erling Söderström. He meets the tribe again three decades later, only to be confronted by the impact of his ignorance.

Sweden, France, Denmark. 93 mins. NC16 (Some Nudity). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Portuguese, Korubo, Swedish, English, French
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Nathan Grossman
PRODUCER Cecilia Nessen
CAST —

SCREENING **OT**
24 OCT, SAT, 2pm | 93 mins +Q&A

Gaza's Twins, Come Back to Me

Forcibly separated from her premature twins in a hospital at the start of the Gaza war, a mother juggles between raising four small children, attempting to reunite with her babies, and survival in the midst of a brutal siege.

Palestine, Qatar, The Netherlands. 87 mins. R21 (Mature Content). Asian Premiere. 2025.

LANGUAGE Arabic
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Mohammed Sawwaf
PRODUCER Mohammed Sawwaf, Salah Al-Haw, Sylvia Sahawneh
CAST —

SCREENING **GVB3**
26 OCT, MON, 9:15pm | 87 mins +Q&A

Mariinka

The lives of childhood neighbours—a promising boxer, a young orphan and four brothers—intersect, implode and diverge across a decade of war in this stirring documentary of the battle in Mariinka, a destroyed city in eastern Ukraine.

Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, Sweden. 94 mins. M18 (Mature Content and Nudity). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English, Ukrainian, Russian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Pieter-Jan De Pue
PRODUCER Bart Van Langendonck, Pieter-Jan De Pue
CAST —

SCREENING **GVB4**
25 OCT, SUN, 6:45pm | 94 mins +Q&A

Prosecution
Staatsschutz

Amid a rise in far-right extremism and racially motivated attacks, Seyo Kim, a young German-Korean state prosecutor, impartially executes the law. But when a masked individual attempts to set her on fire, her engagement with the law becomes personal.

Germany. 113 mins. M18 (Some Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE German, Korean
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Faraz Shariat
PRODUCER Paulina Lorenz, Jorgo Narjes, Faraz Shariat
CAST Chen Emilie Yan, Julia Jentsch, Alev Irmak

SCREENING **FHGR**
1 NOV, SUN, 7pm | 113 mins

Rehearsals for a Revolution
خاطرات ایران

Through five generations of personal stories, this documentary reveals how memories of resistance survive beyond political upheavals. A poetic portrait of Iran's ongoing struggle, it explores storytelling and everyday acts of defiance as quiet forms of revolution.

Iran, Czech Republic, Spain. 95 mins. NC16 (Some Mature Content). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Persian, English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Pegah Ahangarani
PRODUCER Parnian Farnam, Pegah Ahangarani, Arash Ashtiani
CAST —

SCREENING **OT**
23 OCT, FRI, 4pm | 95 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **OT**
25 OCT, SUN, 9:15pm | 95 mins

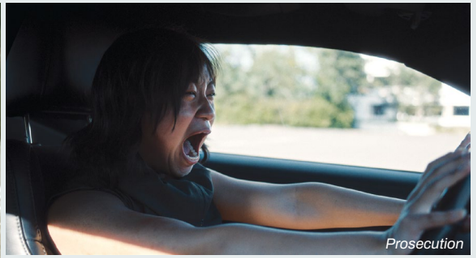

Gaza's Twins, Come Back to Me


Rehearsals for a Revolution

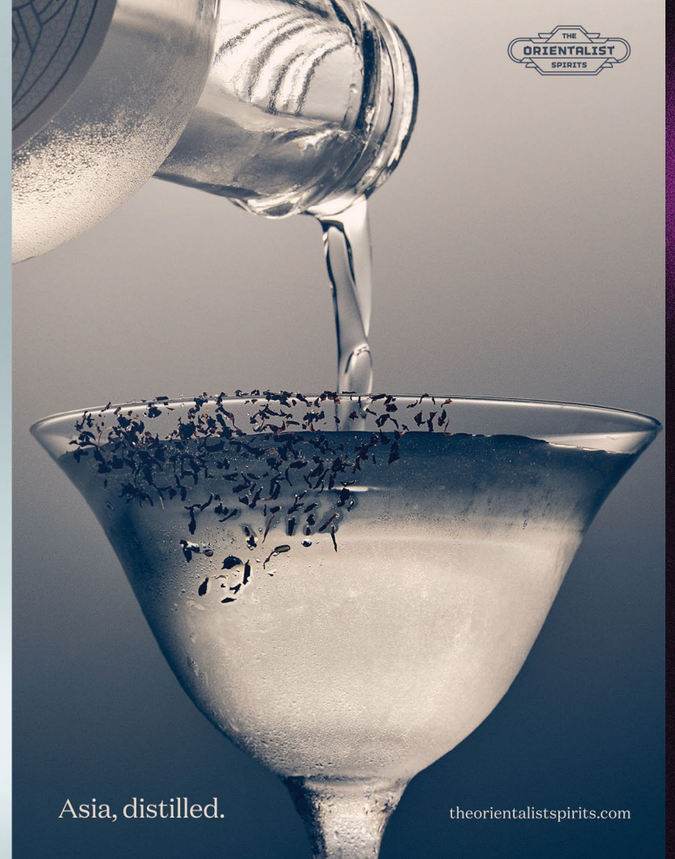

Mariinka


32 Meters


Amazomania


Prosecution





Undercurrent

Undercurrent explores the boldest corners of cinematic art, celebrating the restive spirit of contemporary artist-filmmakers.

Featuring eleven moving-image works and screen-based performances, this dynamic selection charts new waters across multidisciplinary forms. By subverting conventional narrative structures, these works invite audiences to stretch their imagination and redefine what the filmic medium can achieve.

Written by Sam I-shan
Co-authored by Gabriel Goh,
Thong Kay Wee and Tracey Toh

For the past five years, *Undercurrent* has evolved while staying true to its core as a section highlighting singular artistic voices, and works that experiment with the boundaries of the moving image. Their formal hybridity and durational range allow us to create dialogues within a single screening but also find resonances across the entire section. We present veteran masters alongside emerging voices, artists who might not typically show their works in festival settings, and works that fall outside established circuits.

A highlight this year is the expanded selection of live acts, with four performances taking place during the opening weekend. These interdisciplinary works explore the related strands of digital virtuality, analogue film forms and physical embodiment.

Shaheer Tarar's *The Compression Zone* features live gameplay, with digital characters moving between defined, rules-based game parameters and the unbounded expanse of the internet. We see how software and technological infrastructure have created another form of visual material: networked computer screens as well as imagery from databases and satellites. These not only influence our perception but literally shape the world around us.

Hsu Che-Yu and Chen Wan-Yin's *Corporeal Forms: Four Stories* combines a lecture performance with video projections and puppetry by traditional glove puppeteer Kuo Chien-Fu. Their work explores ways that historical and subjective realities are constructed through reenactments, appropriation and replication, opening discussions about animal autonomy, human agency and state sovereignty.

Long-time collaborators Takashi Makino and Lawrence English present two performances centred around their respective interests in the phenomenology of image and sound. For *Imagination*, Takashi Makino scanned unexposed film recovered from Japan's oldest film developing laboratory and combined these with thirty thousand digital still images of an empty sky, creating an analogue-digital chimera that meditates on the possibilities of creating something from "nothing." The experience of *Imagination* is completed with a sound performance by Lawrence English. English will subsequently perform selections from his new album, *The Rest Is My Ghost*, in which he proposes to sonically explore the ways that nostalgia has been weaponised to obscure the dangers looming in our shared futures. Makino will in turn create new images to accompany this performance.

The discovery of mutual resonances and discursive exchanges continues in the film pairings and compilation screenings in the rest of the section. Each work in the triple bill of Komtouch Napattaloong's *In Sum*, Nima Nassaj's *Fruits of Despair* and Rico Wong's *Compact Disc* combine found or recovered footage with new material shot by different technological generations of the camera apparatus. These films touch on the history of northeastern Thailand, the war in Iran and Palestine, and protest movements in Hong Kong respectively. Film, video and digital imagery layered with subtle visual effects suggest the presence of competing narratives about historical and contemporary events.

Meanwhile, Shireen Seno's short film, *You Dreamt You Saw Yourself But Couldn't See Your Face*, makes for a perhaps unexpected pairing with Nicolaas Schmidt's feature debut, *September Afternoon*. Diegetic and manipulated sound and music are crucial to the way that these two sensuously mysterious works explore familial relationships amidst broader existential questions. In these films, the small, sometimes ritualistic, gestures of humans are set against the inexplicable flux of nature.

Artists Ana Vaz and Liao Jiekai have worked with analogue film for decades, and their new feature films are formally inventive assemblages that seek to express the ineffable and imperceptible. Made from film and archival materials spanning a decade, Vaz's *Hanabi* explores the consequences of the Fukushima nuclear disaster. The rich visual polyphony of urban, rural and natural landscapes represents the voices of existences that have been profoundly changed by catastrophe. Seeking to represent the invisible and suppressed effects of radioactivity, Vaz associatively combines images, sound and music into contrapuntal and occasionally dissonant layers.

Liao and Elysa Wendi's *On Memories of Countless Days Away* finds rhythm in dance and movement as they explore the vagaries of the creative process and their respective experiences of wandering and absence. Also featuring multiple collaborators, performers and voices, this film is rare in its candid exchanges between the filmmakers as they circle around their artistic process and legacies in conversation and choreography. This process of searching and revealing is characteristic of films in *Undercurrent*, which continually reach beyond the porous boundaries of the medium of the moving image. The artists' curiosity about the temporal and physical possibilities of cinema prompts us to shift our ways of looking at and experiencing the world.



Corporeal Forms: Four Stories

Live Performance

Germany, Taiwan. 45 mins. Advisory
(Some Mature Content). Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES —
DIRECTOR Chen Wan-Yin, Hsu Che-Yu
PRODUCER Chen Wan-Yin, Hsu Che-Yu
CAST Chen Wan-Yin, Hsu Che-Yu, Kuo Chien-Fu

SCREENING **EAS**
24 OCT, SAT, 4pm | 45 mins +Q&A
SCREENING **EAS**
25 OCT, SUN, 4:30pm | 45 mins

A puppeteer breaks the joints of a dead sparrow, reanimating it to fly again. From that gesture, Hsu Che-Yu and Chen Wan-Yin move through four stories about what the imagination conjures, told as oblique microhistories: a laboratory rabbit killed for swine fever vaccine; ancestral portraits whose photographed faces sit on reused studio backdrops painted in Eastern gouache; Mongolia's last wild horses, bred backwards under the Third Reich and today through surrogates; and conjoined twins separated on live television in 1979.

Animated by master puppeteer Kuo Chien-Fu—who works in budaixi (Taiwanese glove puppetry), where the hand inside the puppet revives its soul—the trio invokes the contradictory attachment to restoring the corporeal semblance of lost things. Conceived together with dramaturg Betty Yi-Chun Chen, the original performance was commissioned by Theater der Welt and Taipei Performing Arts Center, and premiered at Frankfurt's Mousonturm."



The Compression Zone

Live Performance

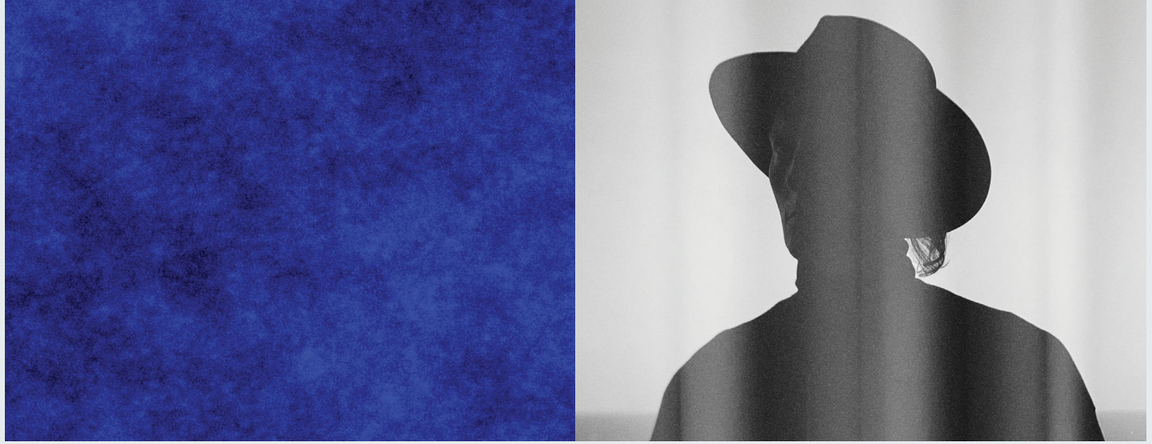
United Kingdom. 45 mins. Restricted 18
(Mature Content). Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES —
DIRECTOR Shaheer Tarar
PRODUCER Shaheer Tarar
CAST Shaheer Tarar

SCREENING **EAS**
23 OCT, FRI, 7:15pm | 45 mins +Q&A
SCREENING **EAS**
24 OCT, SAT, 6:30pm | 45 mins

Playing alongside the game's protagonist, we descend into a techno-pastel dungeon called *The Compression Zone*, where data demons offer to act as our messengers but demand something in return: a Faustian pact for our times. Homebrewed on the Unity engine and updated at every performance, Shaheer's video game shifts our focus to the tools of perception in our digitally mediated realities. It unpacks how the algorithmic logics of data infrastructure shape what we see: data is packaged and compiled, deployed across corners of the globe, stretching over land and coursing through undersea fibre-optic lines—leaving imprints on the very environments they render on our screens.

Drawn partly from his move from Lahore to Canada during his growing-up years, the video-game lecture traces the expansion of cartographic imagination precipitated by the early internet. At the same time, it explores how the convenience of instant knowledge rests on compression algorithms that make a value judgement about what counts as 'loss' in the process.



Imagination + The Rest Is My Ghost

Live Performance

Japan, Australia. 75 mins. G.
Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE No Dialogue
SUBTITLES —
DIRECTOR Takashi Makino, Lawrence English
PRODUCER Takashi Makino, Lawrence English
CAST —

SCREENING **EAS**
24 OCT, SAT, 9pm | 75 mins
SCREENING **EAS**
25 OCT, SUN, 7pm | 75 mins +Q&A

Imagination opens this double bill of light and sound. Among the ruins of Japan's oldest film laboratory were voluminous century-old 35mm and 16mm reels that had been developed but never exposed. Takashi Makino scanned them at 8K for their materiality alone, which gave him nothing but grain in constant motion. Turning from these decayed reels towards a vaster emptiness, he layered the grainy remains of images with over 30,000 photographs of a cloudless sky shot from the roof of the ruins. Lawrence English accompanies Makino's visuals with a virtuosic performance, expanding the physical experience of emptiness with the sonic sublime.

The second billing, *The Rest Is My Ghost*, is the final instalment of a trilogy by English, after *Cruel Optimism and Wilderness of Mirrors*. He uses processed field recordings, synthesis and amplified low-frequency noise as his response to what he calls 'acid nostalgia': the past's hauntings flattened and weaponised in the current political mood. Makino responds intuitively with spectral beams of light penetrating the haze, dancing with the prophetic sounds of a ruinous world. Acting as each other's muse, they craft a luminous performance that invites us to experience the weight of nothingness and the fullness of being.

Hanabi

Fire Flower / Fleur de Feu / Flor de Fogo / 花火

Hanabi depicts the people, flora and fauna, and natural and urban landscapes affected by the invisible dangers of radioactivity. Intricate imagery, sound design, narration and text form a polyphonic narrative about the relationship between civilisation, change and catastrophe.

France, Brazil. 107 mins. NC16 (Some Coarse Language). Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese, English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Ana Vaz
PRODUCER Ana Vaz, Corinne Castel
CAST Yukari Morimoto, Kota Takeuchi, K.A.

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FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

SCREENING **OT**
1 NOV, SUN, 11am | 107 mins

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

On Memories of Countless Days Away

山林記憶

Two friends recall their childhoods in Singapore, revisit their earlier films and perform a dance for which no recording remains. Their musings and archives are woven together in a meditation on how memories are not recovered, but composed anew.

Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong. 102 mins. PG. World Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English, Mandarin, Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Elysa Wendi, Liao Jiekai
PRODUCER Elysa Wendi, Liao Jiekai, Akiho Furuichi
CAST Gigi Yang

SCREENING **OT**
26 OCT, MON, 6:15pm | 102 mins +Q&A



On Memories of Countless Days Away



Hanabi

Undercurrent Double Bill

You Dreamt You Saw Yourself But Couldn't See Your Face

SUPPORTED BY:

FILM DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF THE PHILIPPINES

Fluid reflections in water and the haunting sound of wind become metaphors for loss, mourning and the passage of time in this personal work featuring three generations of a family.

Philippines, United States. 7 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Shireen Seno PRODUCER John Torres, Shireen Seno CAST Jolly Seno, Elias Yuki Torres, Aki Tala Torres

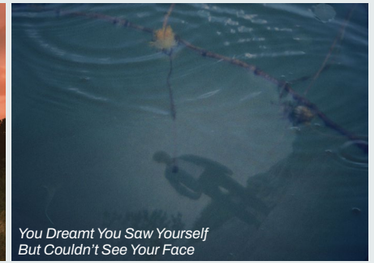
September Afternoon

As summertime ends, a couple, their young child and an acquaintance visit the beach, but are beset by strong winds and a slowly encroaching calamity. This strange film uses colour, mise-en-scène and sound design to suggest another way of experiencing the emptiness and dread of time.

Germany. 70 mins. PG13 (Some Mature References). Asian Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE No Dialogue SUBTITLES —
DIRECTOR Maximilian Haslberger, Balthasar Busmann PRODUCER Parnian Farnam, Pegah Ahangarani, Arash Ashtiani CAST Hedi Großmann, Katharina Großmann, Amin Motallebzadeh



September Afternoon



You Dreamt You Saw Yourself But Couldn't See Your Face

SCREENING **OT**
23 OCT, FRI, 9pm | 77 mins

Undercurrent Triple Bill

In Sum
ผีพัฒนา

Glitchy fragments shot by an obsolete digital camera overlay archival films about rural development in Thailand during the Cold War, presenting competing perspectives about national stability and regional security.

Thailand. 17 mins. PG13 (Some Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Thai, English SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Komtouch Napattaloong
PRODUCER Dano Napattaloong CAST —

Fruits of Despair
میوههایملال

While making a documentary about the Israel-Palestine conflict, an Iranian filmmaker finds himself in a warzone when Israel and the US attacked Iran in early 2026. This hybrid film connects displacement, loss and mortality that span decades across borders.

Iran. 29 mins. R21 (Mature Content). Asian Premiere. 2026. LANGUAGE Farsi
SUBTITLES English DIRECTOR Nima Nassaj
PRODUCER Nima Nassaj CAST —

Compact Disc

A filmmaker meets with his friends who were imprisoned after the 2019–20 protests in Hong Kong to talk about their fragmented memories from those years. The audiovisual materials and devices they examine suggest the challenges of finding truth and resolution through documentation.

Hong Kong, UK. 38 mins. NC16 (Mature Content and Coarse Language). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.
LANGUAGE Cantonese SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Rico Wong PRODUCER Chan Hau-chun, Jessie Yang CAST —



In Sum



Fruits of Despair



Compact Disc

SCREENING **OT**
1 NOV, SUN, 1:30pm | 84 mins **+Q&A**

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Horizon

Horizon offers a bird's-eye view of contemporary world cinema, bringing together diverse filmic discoveries and celebrated works from the international festival circuit.

Featuring visionary, established auteurs alongside bold emerging talents, these seventeen compelling films present powerful stories from across the globe—deepening what we know about the human condition and expanding our own horizons with every single frame.

Written by Sim Jiaying
Co-authored by Monica Gyamlani, Thong Kay Wee and Tracey Toh

Feminist film theorist Teresa de Lauretis describes a film's spatial environment as "a horizon of possible meanings," one extending beyond the screen. An image may be encountered as an intimate moment, a social condition or a trace of political history, with none cancelling the others.

The section's seventeen titles span five continents and inhabit genres and styles such as the road movie, period film, animation, docufiction and altered realism. Geography and form guided our selection alongside questions of representation and how race, class, gender, age, mobility, migration, labour and international co-production shape perspective. These films take the temperature of the present social milieu without claiming to diagnose it.

Horizon's opening film, Semmalar Annam's *Mayilaa*, addresses the inequality of mobility. Facing abuse and poverty in rural Tamil Nadu, a mother travels with her daughter to sell straw mats. The road converts enforced movement into labour. Auguste Bernard Kouemo Yanghu's *House of the Wind* centres on an elderly woman in Cameroon waiting for her children living overseas to return home. Koji Fukada's *Nagi Notes* follows an architect who visits her former sister-in-law in rural Japan after living in Taiwan. Filmed in Latvia while in exile, Andrey Zvyagintsev's *Minotaur* places a failing marriage against the backdrop of Russian politics. In these four films, we observe who gets to leave, who is forced to leave, who remains and who returns, as well as the circumstances that dictate each of them.

Visar Morina's *Shame and Money* carries forced mobility into the relationship between labour and dignity. As circumstances push a Kosovar farming family towards city life, the recurring line "shame is a luxury" names what becomes unaffordable when poor wages and injustice narrow choice. Lost livelihoods wound masculine pride, while women perform unpaid emotional labour to keep the family together. Rafael Manuel's *Filipiñana* moves through a Manila golf club where a seventeen-year-old tee girl maintains a landscape devoted to others' leisure. Its manicured surfaces hide fissures of class, gender and colonial power relations. Radu Jude's *The Diary of a Chambermaid* follows a Romanian domestic worker in France who performs in an adaptation of Octave Mirbeau's novel. The affected empathy of her employers shades into condescension. Across these films, labour determines how a body is valued, positioned and permitted to move.

Markus Schleinzer's *Rose* turns from social strata to the material body. Set after the Thirty Years' War, it tells the story of a soldier who has been living as a man and returns to claim a dead comrade's identity and farm. Lucila Mariani's *The Days Off* follows a twelve-year-old drawn to "shifting," which promises entry into a preferred reality. One assumes another social existence to survive; the other imagines release from a self that does not belong. Both ask what a body can endure, perform or imagine, and what limits those capacities.

Beth de Araújo's *Josephine* shifts our attention from embodied identity to bodily safety. After witnessing a sexual assault, an eight-year-old responds aggressively when adults cannot restore her security. Their failure raises the question: what can care accomplish when it cannot undo harm? Questions of care work and mortality are raised in Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *All of a Sudden*, through the kinship between a French nursing-home director and a terminally ill Japanese theatre-maker. Their friendship develops via acts of attention, where care is practice rather than solution.

Yet when loss occurs, memories may be all we have left. Cinematic intervention offers a way to reorganise what memory cannot reconstruct, by shaping a present now characterised by an unyielding absence. Sandra Wollner's *Everytime* centres on a family holiday that never occurred, allowing grief to unsettle lived and imagined experiences. Leah Nelson's animation, *Tangles*, follows a daughter returning home as Alzheimer's changes her mother, holding illness, queer love and family together. Bruno Santamaría Razo's *Six Months in a Pink and Blue Building* combines fiction, interviews and fantasy to revisit a Mexico City childhood shaped by his father's HIV diagnosis and emerging desire. Each develops a language for living with what remains.

Self-reflexive image-making asks who controls the frame and mediates the lives within. In Lee Chang-dong's *Possible Love*, a working-class couple scarred by a suppressed strike become subjects of an affluent filmmaker's documentary. Lee punctuates the story's gravity with humour, making the wealthy characters' distance from working-class life absurd and painful. Hirokazu Koreeda's *Look Back* presents artistic creation as a source of friendship and rivalry between two young aspiring manga artists. Hong Sang-soo's *Nowhere to Lay My Eyes* folds art into the everyday, ruminating on observation, as a filmmaker visits her semi-estranged mother. Across the three, creating images becomes a relationship shaped by power, intimacy and obligation.

Through this programme, we hope to bring these films close enough together so that they might speak to each other and thus open up new ways of understanding them. Horizon is not a view from nowhere, but a capacious cinematic field in which situated perspectives meet and continue to point outward.



Opening Film

Mayilaa
மயிலா

India. 94 mins. NC16 (Some Coarse Language). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Tamil
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Semmalar Annam
PRODUCER Anto Chittilappilly
CAST P. Melody Dorcas, V. Shudar Kodi

SCREENING **GVC2**
22 OCT, THU, 9pm | 94 mins +Q&A

After leaving her abusive husband, Mayilaa makes a meagre living while raising her daughter, who suffers from constipation. She banks on her pluck along with a peculiar, fiercely devoted connection to the village goddess whose name she shares. But when Mayilaa loses her job and a religious duty looms, she must hit the road and leave her village in rural Tamil Nadu to sell straw mats, with her daughter in tow.

On a cranky moped, knocking on door after door, she often runs up against chauvinism or classism. But the world beyond her village offers its own curiosities too. Mayilaa's travels often bring her into the orbits of women entirely unlike her, who lovingly extend solidarity or remain coolly indifferent, all to her wonder.

From its nonprofessional cast to the unassumingly infectious rhythm, *Mayilaa* is a debut that brims with confidence. Its neorealist observation and surrealist sequences suture multitudes within the material and spiritual lives of women in rural India. Delivering a lively vision of feminist freedom with a dose of scatological humour, *Mayilaa* paints a woman's defiance with care and empathy.



Special Presentation

Look Back
ルックバック

Japan. 100 mins. PG (Brief Nudity). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English, Chinese
DIRECTOR Hirokazu Koreeda
PRODUCER Daiju Koide
CAST Natsuki Deguchi, Aju Makita, Furi Nanase

SCREENING **GVV**
24 OCT, SAT, 7pm | 100 mins +Q&A

Outgoing and sure of her gift, Fujino is the star of her elementary school paper—her four-panel comics bring great delight to her classmates. One day Kyomoto, a shut-in, gets a comic slot as well, and Fujino realises that Kyomoto's drawings are far beyond anything she can achieve. Envy hardens into obsession; though no matter how hard Fujino tries, she is unable to reach Kyomoto's level.

When the two girls finally meet, their rivalry turns into something rarer: a friendship that blossoms as their manga journeys take flight. Yet when the chance to create a serial arrives, it pulls them in different directions. What becomes of a friendship built on the page?

Adapted from Tatsuki Fujimoto's acclaimed one-shot manga, *Look Back* returns Hirokazu Koreeda to the register he knows best: children observed at close range, over time, with patience rather than sentiment. Trading animation's stylisation for his signature naturalism, he lets the two protagonists simply grow up on camera, in the intimacy of 35mm film.

All of a Sudden
Soudain

Enveloped in care and tenderness, the conversations between a Paris nursing home director and a dying Japanese playwright become a space for gradual transformation.

France, Japan, Germany, Belgium.
196 mins. PG. Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE French, Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Ryusuke Hamaguchi
PRODUCER David Gauquié, Julien Deris, Kosuke Oshida, Yuji Sadaï
CAST Virginie Efira, Tao Okamoto, Kyozo Nagatsuka

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FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

SCREENING **NMS**
23 OCT, FRI, 2pm | 196 mins

SCREENING **GVB6**
25 OCT, SUN, 7:15pm | 196 mins

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Everytime

A mother, daughter and teenage boy are drawn into the orbit of an absent loved one in this intimate study of grief. They take a trip to a seaside resort, where reality shimmers under the glistening sun and time folds into itself.

Austria, Germany. 124 mins. NC16 (Some Drug Use). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE German, Spanish
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Sandra Wollner
PRODUCER Lixi Frank, David Bohun, Viktoria Stolpe, Sandra Wollner
CAST Birgit Minichmayr, Tristan López, Lotte Keiling, Carla Hüttermann

SCREENING **NMS**
24 OCT, SAT, 4pm | 124 mins

SCREENING **GVB4**
1 NOV, SUN, 9:15pm | 124 mins

Filipiñana

In this stylish and darkly funny feature debut, a tee girl's mission to return a golf club to the country club president leads her to uncover sinister secrets about her workplace, exposing elite society's dark underbelly.

Singapore, UK, Philippines, France, Netherlands. 99 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language and Sexual References). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Filipino, English, Ilokano
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Rafael Manuel
PRODUCER Jeremy Chua, Alex Polunin, Bradley Liew, Bianca Balbuena, Nadia Turincev, Omar El Kadi, Rafael Manuel
CAST Jorrybell Agoto, Teroy Guzman, Carmen Castellanos

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SCREENING **NMS**
1 NOV, SUN, 2pm | 99 mins

House of the Wind
La maison du vent

An elderly woman builds a house to entice her children working in Europe to return to Cameroon, but a surprising companionship with a young woman in her neighbourhood upends all she believed about familial ties.

Cameroon, France, Belgium, Benin, Saudi Arabia, Qatar. 105mins.
PG. Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE French, Bafang
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Auguste Bernard Kouemo Yanghu
PRODUCER Auguste Bernard Kouemo Yanghu, Arthur Grec, John Engel, Faissol Gnonlonfin, Linda Natacha Kwanya Siakam
CAST Josette Kwanya, Moudjeu Pouadeu, Adrien Jolivet

SCREENING **GVB4**
1 NOV, SUN, 2pm | 105 mins

Josephine

After eight-year-old Josephine witnesses a violent crime, the trauma lingers in profound ways as her parents try to shield her from adult realities.

USA. 121 mins. M18 (Sexual Violence).
Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES —
DIRECTOR Beth de Araujo
PRODUCER David Kaplan, Beth de Araújo, Marina Stabile, Josh Peters, Mark H. Rapaport, Crystine Zhang
CAST Mason Reeves, Channing Tatum, Gemma Chan

SCREENING **NMS**
29 OCT, THU, 4pm | 121 mins

SCREENING **NMS**
31 OCT, SAT, 4:30pm | 121 mins

Minotaur

As Russia descends into war, an influential businessowner in a small town decides whose lives are disposable. His betrayals pile up, exposing the moral and political corruption that insulates the powerful while the world burns.

France, Germany, Latvia. 141 mins. M18 (Nudity). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Russian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Andrey Zvyagintsev
PRODUCER Charles Gillibert, Elisha Karmitz, Nathanaël Karmitz, Marco Perego, Andrey Zvyagintsev
CAST Dmitriy Mazurov, Iris Lebedeva, Boris Kudrin

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FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

SCREENING **NMS**
24 OCT, SAT, 10:15am | 141 mins

SCREENING **GVB6**
31 OCT, SAT, 7:15pm | 141 mins

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Nagi Notes
ナギダイアリー

Against the backdrop of idyllic mountains and sounds of gunfire from a military camp, an architect arrives in Nagi to model for a sculpture by her ex-sister-in-law. Over eight days, both find themselves confronting unresolved loss and desires.

Japan, France, Singapore, Philippines.
110 mins. M18 (Some Homosexual Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Koji Fukada
PRODUCER Atsuko Ohno, Ryo Nagai, Michiaki Tsunoda
CAST Takako Matsu, Shizuka Ishibashi, Ken'ichi Matsuyama

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SINGAPORE – JAPAN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS 1965 – 2025

SCREENING **NMS**
28 OCT, WED, 4:15pm | 110 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVB3**
29 OCT, THU, 8:45pm | 110 mins +Q&A

Nowhere to Lay My Eyes
눈 둘 데가 없네

An experimental filmmaker reunites with her mother after a decade's absence. This ruminative work in Hong's prolific oeuvre hides a quietly transformative quality.

South Korea. 72 mins. PG.
Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Korean
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Hong Sang-soo
PRODUCER Hong Sang-soo
CAST Kim Min-hee, Choi Myeong-gil, Kwon Hae-hyo

SCREENING **FHRR**
24 OCT, SAT, 9:30pm | 72 mins

SCREENING **GVB5**
26 OCT, MON, 4:30pm | 72 mins

Possible Love
가능한 사랑

A working-class family and a wealthy couple become entangled as they make a documentary together. Tensions simmer and loyalties shift in Lee Chang-dong's exquisite, slow-burn drama, which asks if the distance between people can ever be closed.

South Korea. 164 mins. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Korean
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Lee Chang-dong
PRODUCER Lee Joon-dong, Lee Chang-dong, David Levine, Chadwick Prichard
CAST Jeon Do-yeon, Sul Kyung-gu, Zo In-sung, Cho Yeo-jeong

SCREENING **GVB3**
25 OCT, SUN, 9pm | 164 mins

SCREENING **NMS**
31 OCT, SAT, 1:15pm | 164 mins

Rose

A battle-scarred soldier arrives at a village, with an inheritance and a deep secret about their identity. Sandra Hüller spellbindingly leads this compact period saga about the violence of gender norms as well as the utopias of desire that cannot be contained.

Austria, Germany. 93 mins. M18 (Sexual Scene and Some Nudity). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE German
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Markus Schleinzer
PRODUCER Johannes Schubert, Philipp Worm, Tobias Walker, Karsten Stöter
CAST Sandra Hüller, Caro Braun

SCREENING **FHGR**
25 OCT, SUN, 9:15pm | 93 mins

SCREENING **NMS**
28 OCT, WED, 2pm | 93 mins

Shame and Money

A family in rural Kosovo leave their farm to find work in the capital. Mired in familial obligation, caregiving and financial precarity, their survival becomes dependent on the whims of strangers.

Germany, Kosovo, Slovenia, Albania, North Macedonia, Belgium. 129mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Albanian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Visar Morina
PRODUCER Fabian Altenried, Sophie Ahrens, Kristof Gerega, Visar Morina, Pia Hellenthal
CAST Astrit Kabashi, Flonja Kodheli

SCREENING **GVB4**
26 OCT, MON, 6:30pm | 129 mins

Six Months in a Pink and Blue Building
Seis meses en el edificio rosa con azul

In this coming-of-age docufiction, an eleven-year-old reckons with his queer identity while coping with his father's HIV diagnosis amid the moral panic of the 1990s AIDS epidemic.

Mexico, Brazil, Denmark. 104 mins. R21 (Homosexual Theme). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Spanish
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Bruno Santamaría Razo
PRODUCER Bruna Haddad, Carlos Quiñónez, Bruno Santamaría Razo
CAST Jade Reyes, Sofía Espinosa, Lázaro G. Rodríguez

SCREENING **FHRR**
24 OCT, SAT, 1:30pm | 104 mins

Tangles

A young graphic artist returns home to care for her mother who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. In the process, she finds grief, comedy and first love tangled together in a household relearning how to love a person they thought they knew.

Canada, USA. 103 mins. R21 (Homosexual Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Leah Nelson PRODUCER Vicky Patel, Steve Barnett, Alan Powell, Seth Rogen, Evan Goldberg, James Weaver, Alex McAtee, Lauren Miller Rogen, Jennifer W., Ray Jay Grandin, Teresa Toews, Leah Nelson, Ross Murray, Julia Louis-Dreyfus CAST Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Sarah Jacobson, Bryan Cranston

SCREENING **FHRR**
23 OCT, FRI, 9:15pm | 103 mins

SCREENING **GVB6**
1 NOV, SUN, 7pm | 103 mins +Q&A

The Days Off
Los días libres

As the moon threatens to "eclipse" animals and people around her, twelve-year-old Bego meets REN__, an online friend who teaches her how to "shift" into her desired reality.

Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, France. 84 mins. PG. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Spanish, Portuguese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Lucila Mariani
PRODUCER Paula Zyngierman, Tathiani Sacilotto, Jessica Luz
CAST Antonia Robolini, Laura Paredes, Luiza Quinteiro

SCREENING **FHRR**
31 OCT, SAT, 7pm | 84 mins

The Diary of a Chambermaid
Le journal d'une femme de chambre

Gianina leaves behind her daughter in Romania to cook, clean and care for a family in France. At night, she rehearses a scandalous play about domestic servants—a vulgar, exaggerated version of the exploitation she quietly endures.

France, Romania. 94 mins. NC16 (Coarse Language and Sexual References). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE French, Romanian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Radu Jude
PRODUCER Saïd Ben Saïd, Kevin Chneiweiss, Vlad Rădulescu, Carmen Rizac
CAST Ana Dumitrascu, Mélanie Thierry, Vincent Macaigne, Marie Rivière

SCREENING **FHGR**
23 OCT, FRI, 8:45pm | 94 mins


Tangles


Everytime


House of the Wind


Six Months in a Pink and Blue Building


Shame and Money


The Diary of a Chambermaid


Nowhere to Lay My Eyes


Filipiñana


All of a Sudden

Foreground

Foreground spotlights popular cinema through the power of film genre, celebrating timeless tropes while pushing their boundaries.

Spanning future cult classics and hidden gems, these ten films keep audiences on the edge of their seats through pulsating action, beguiling storylines and charismatic performances. It is an immersive celebration of storytelling, whether fulfilling classic expectations or completely subverting them for thrills.

Written by Richard Bolisay
Co-authored by Ryan Pagdanganan and Thong Kay Wee

Over the years, this section of SGIFF has offered the most exciting crop of features across genres from around the world, redefining what popular cinema means for the Singaporean audience. The films here emphasise playful vision; they move between fun and intelligent, compelling and profound, colourful and witty.

Despite being well versed in amusement, Foreground programmers are not just looking for the most thrilling rides or the most eye-catching sights. We go deeper and wander off the beaten path. What thrills us is the intense kick of curation, the imposing but delightful task of mixing and matching an eclectic set of films and filmmakers. Having watched countless submissions and scoured the largest film festivals, we regard this year's selection not only as technical marvels and feats of imagination but also as astute responses to some of today's hardest existential questions.

It is only fitting, then, to have Nelson Yeo's genre-bending sophomore feature, *The House on the Moon*, as our opening film. Mixing science-fiction, fantasy, romance and wuxia, it underlines the importance of retelling mythologies – in this case, the legend of Chang'e and Hou Yi, whose undying love defies all odds. Premiering in the main competition at Locarno, the film solidifies Yeo's status as one of Southeast Asia's foremost auteurs.

Coasting down from the rocky landscapes of the moon, we return to earth with some exceptional films about women. Edwin's *Sleep No More* is set in a haunted wig factory in Jakarta, where a mother's mysterious death prompts her two daughters to investigate it. Using horror tropes and the supernatural to explore Indonesian society's terrible treatment of the working class, the film is at its core a story of a family separated by poverty and exploitation. Another exploration of class boundaries is Paolo Strippoli's thriller *The Spiral*, which begins with a confession of a mother to her daughter about an accident that happened twenty years ago. Divided into several chapters, the film transforms the seemingly bare narrative into a full-blown Faustian drama.

We also present two films about female autonomy: one set in the turbulent past, one in the distant future. The titular mother from the 1970s-set Japanese drama *Fujiko* leaves her feckless husband and runs away with her baby to raise her on her own. Taichi Kimura's direction, Yuki Katayama's performance and the film's upbeat soundtrack elevate a familiar premise into an irresistible concoction that is sure to be an audience favourite. Catalan filmmaker Maria Martínez Bayona's *The End of It* imagines a future where humans have found a way to live forever. Its central character, Claire (played by the luminous Rebecca Hall), announces her desire to die on her 250th birthday, and her journey towards this goal unfolds with equal parts bleakness and humour.

Have we forgotten about men and their idiosyncrasies? Of course not. In *Vertiginous*, Quentin Dupieux's absurdist comedy, we follow two middle-aged men and their serious quest to confirm that their reality is indeed a simulation. The existential adventure is both bizarre and familiar: the animated characters, designed using the open-source software Blender, live in a low-resolution world that harks back to early videogame graphics. The same fraternal ties are present in James Gray's *Paper Tiger*, except the stakes are higher. Two brothers, played with remarkable intensity by Adam Driver and Miles Teller, are caught in a squabble with the Russian mob in Queens, New York City, in the 1980s. Gray's trademark slow burn and emotional density are on full display here, with the most thrilling shootout sequence he has ever staged.

Some of the year's much-anticipated Cannes entries provide Foreground with extraordinary energy and fervour. Starring Hannah Einbinder as a young filmmaker and Gillian Anderson as a reclusive former actress, *Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma* reworks the slasher genre and finds director Jane Schoenbrun at the peak of their bloody powers. It gives horror a refreshing direction with its liberating subversions of the genre's misogynistic tropes. Another daring study of gender dynamics is Arthur Harari's *The Unknown*, whose central intrigue toys with the body swap as a storytelling device and turns the conventional premise of a man "becoming" a woman into a whirlwind of existential crisis. And the result is hardly comic, with Léa Seydoux delivering the gravitas to pull off such an unhinged and complex role. Finally, Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi's sprawling epic *La Bola Negra* engages with nearly a century of Spain's history, featuring three gay men across three timelines whose desires to be accepted are thwarted by conservative society. Inspired by Federico Garcia Lorca's unfinished play, the film brings back voices silenced by time, complemented by breathtaking landscapes that deserve to be admired in the cinema.

The entertainment value of each of these titles cannot be overstated, but what they convey through their creative visions and formal experimentations go much deeper. Individually, each film glimmers with insight. As a programme, they form a constellation whose figure varies with every viewer, but whose glow will be remembered long after the credits have rolled.



Opening Film

The House on the Moon
明月共此時

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Singapore, Taiwan, Indonesia, Germany. 104 mins. NC16 (Sexual Scene and Some Mature Content). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Mandarin, Hokkien
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Nelson Yeo
PRODUCER Tan Si En, Wendy Lie, Kuek Shee Heng
CAST Lim Shi-An, Akira Huang, Harry Chang, Lee Kang-sheng

SCREENING **GVV**
24 OCT, SAT, 3:30pm | 104 mins +Q&A

The legendary archer Hou Yi goes missing during a mission to save a dying sun. This prompts his lover, the fairy maiden Chang'e, to embark on a dangerous journey to find him on the dark side of the moon. Along the way, she encounters strange figures, including a bandit from earth who accompanies her on her quest. Their journey leads them to Peng Meng, who has come in search of Chang'e's last remaining elixir of immortality.

In a genre-defying mix of science-fiction, fantasy, romance and wuxia, *The House on the Moon* takes on the timeless Chinese legend of Chang'e and Hou Yi and transforms it into a bold, inventive spectacle. Billed as Singapore's first-ever feature-length wuxia film and the country's first feature produced using virtual production technology, Nelson Yeo's highly anticipated sophomore effort challenges expectations of its source material, taking Singaporean cinema to exciting new heights.

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Fujiko

1970s, Japan. Former disco dancer Fujiko finds her groove as a single mother after reclaiming her baby from her in-laws. Fusing an irreverent rock 'n' roll spirit with comedy, the drama celebrates independence in a patriarchal society.

Japan. 95 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Japanese
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Taichi Kimura
PRODUCER Megumi
CAST Yuki Katayama, Lily Franky, Issey Ogata

SCREENING **GVB3**
25 OCT, SUN, 2pm | 95 mins

La Bola Negra

Across epochs—Republican Spain in 1932, the Civil War in 1937 and contemporary Madrid in 2017—three men navigate historical turmoil and repression, connected by love, loss and literature, in this sweeping work of queer cinema.

Spain, France. 157 mins.
R21 (Homosexual Content).
Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Spanish
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Javier Ambrossi, Javier Calvo
PRODUCER Javier Calvo, Javier Ambrossi, Jorge Pezzi
CAST Guitarricadelafuente, Miguel Bernardeau, Carlos González

SCREENING **GVB5**
25 OCT, SUN, 10:30am | 157 mins

SCREENING **NMS**
1 NOV, SUN, 10:30am | 157 mins

Paper Tiger

A modest father in 1980s New York and his unremarkable family find their lives upturned by a get-rich scheme gone wrong. This textured crime thriller is anchored in performances that underscore the grandness, despair and humanity of wanting more.

USA. 114 mins. NC16 (Some Coarse Language). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR James Gray
PRODUCER Rodrigo Teixeira, Anthony Katagas, Raffaella Leone, Andrea Leone, Marco Perego, Leonardo Maria del Vecchio, Gary Farkas, Carlo Salem, Andrea Bucko
CAST Miles Teller, Adam Driver, Scarlett Johansson

SCREENING **FHGR**
24 OCT, SAT, 9pm | 114 mins

SCREENING **NMS**
30 OCT, FRI, 1:30pm | 114 mins

AUDIENCE CHOICE AWARD

Sleep No More
Monster Pabrik Rambut

Two sisters attempt to uncover the truth of their mother's death amid possessions and hauntings in a wig factory. Indonesian director Edwin's foray into horror highlights the systematic exploitation of workers through grotesque means.

Indonesia, Singapore, Japan, Germany, France. 96 mins. M18 (Violence and Gore). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Indonesian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Edwin
PRODUCER Meiske Taurisia, Muhammad Zaidy
CAST Rachel Amanda, Lutesha, Iqbaal Ramadhan

SCREENING **FHGR**
27 OCT, TUES, 8:45pm | 96 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **GVC2**
31 OCT, SAT, 9:30pm | 96 mins

Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma

The road to a queer woman's sexual awakening is paved with geysers of blood and radical vulnerability, powered by fantasy and imagination. Guilty pleasures have never felt more seen in this healing, tonally surprising take on the slasher genre.

United States, Canada. 112 mins. R21 (Sexual Scenes and Coarse Language). Singapore Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Jane Schoenbrun
PRODUCER Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner
CAST Hannah Einbinder, Gillian Anderson

SCREENING **NMS**
26 OCT, MON 4:00PM | 112 min

SCREENING **FHGR**
31 OCT, SAT, 9pm | 112 mins

The End of It

Claire announces at her 250th birthday party her decision to die, which is challenged by family and friends. As her final day approaches, she turns her death into an artist's statement.

UK, Norway, Spain. 102 mins. M18 (Nudity). Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Maria Martínez Bayona
PRODUCER Emilie Jouffroy, Kamille Kristiane Hodøl, Adrià Monés Murlans
CAST Rebecca Hall, Gael García Bernal, Noomi Rapace, Beanie Feldstein

SCREENING **FHRR**
1 NOV, SUN, 9:15pm | 102 mins

The Spiral
L'Estranea

When a freak accident threatens Anna's image of a perfect family, the matriarch makes a Faustian deal that leads to a spiral of annihilation in this morality tale hinged on bourgeois anxieties.

Italy, France, Belgium. 115 mins. M18 (Some Homosexual Content). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE Italian
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Paolo Strippoli
PRODUCER Marina Marzotto, Mattia Oddone, Jean-Christophe Reymond, Joseph Rouschop, Eva Curia
CAST Jasmine Trinca, Romana Maggiora Vergano, Adriano Giannini

SUPPORTED BY:

SCREENING **GVB3**
30 OCT, FRI, 9pm | 115 mins +Q&A

The Unknown
L'inconnue

A reclusive Paris photographer follows a woman home from a party and wakes up the next morning inside her body, setting off an unnerving search for her identity and what he has become.

France, Italy. 139 mins. M18 (Sexual Scenes and Nudity). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE French
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Arthur Harari
PRODUCER Nicolas Anthomé
CAST Lea Seydoux, Niels Schneider, Valérie Dréville

WITH SUPPORT FROM:

SCREENING **GVB3**
28 OCT, WED, 8:45pm | 139 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **OT**
1 NOV, SUN, 4:30pm | 139 mins

Vertiginous
Le Vertige

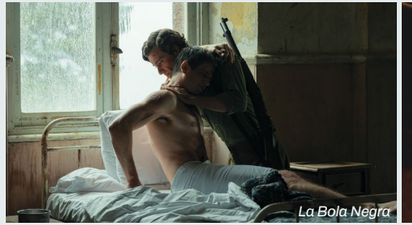
Jacques wakes Bruno up at daybreak to deliver a life-changing revelation: nothing is real—they are living in a simulation and he has the evidence to prove it. Struck by existential vertigo, Bruno soon reaps the benefits of this discovery.

France. 67 mins. NC16 (Some Disturbing Scenes). Southeast Asian Premiere. 2026.

LANGUAGE French
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Quentin Dupieux
PRODUCER Hugo Sélignac, Quentin Dupieux
CAST Jonathan Cohen, Alain Chabat, Anaïs Demoustier

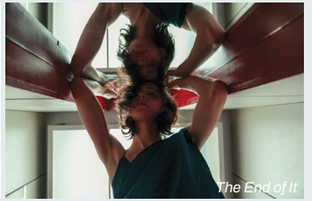
WITH SUPPORT FROM:

SCREENING **GVC2**
26 OCT, MON, 9:30pm | 67 mins


La Bola Negra

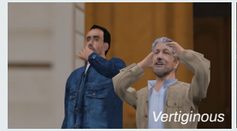

Paper Tiger


Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma


The End of It


The Spiral


Fujiko


Vertiginous


Sleep No More



The Unknown

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Landmark

Societies are often built top-down, governed by policies and systems according to some people's vision of what makes a "better" society—but who gets left behind in the process?

Co-presented with the Asian Film Archive, Landmark showcases recent restorations of seven international classics from the 1970s to the 2000s, including a twenty-fifth anniversary presentation of *Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India* (2001). These rediscovered films explore the invisible tensions between institutions and the people living in these structures, through stories of those who navigate, resist and survive them.

CO-PRESENTED WITH: ASIAN FILM ARCHIVE an nlb Singapore subsidiary

Written by Alexander Lee
Co-authored by Ryan Pagdanganan

This year marks the fourth edition of Landmark co-presented with the Asian Film Archive, which showcases recent restorations of international classics. Amid growing anxieties surrounding urbanised living – from widening socioeconomic inequalities and environmental degradation to the strained infrastructures keeping our cities in constant motion – this year's selection focuses on the architecture of a city in both macro and micro views. From canonical works to newly minted classics, they consider how the structures of city life are experienced, negotiated and contested.

The special presentation, *Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India* (2001), directed by Ashutosh Gowariker and starring Aamir Khan, is set in 1893 colonial India. It follows a group of villagers learning to play a game of cricket against the British Indian Army as a wager to avoid paying hefty taxes. The sports epic tells a potent story about resistance against systems of modernisation and the structures of power.

The opening film, *Cageman* (1992) by Jacob Cheung, features an ensemble cast of characters living in Hong Kong's squalid bedspace apartments known as cage homes. Each cage home consists of one loft bed surrounded by a metal cage where dozens of residents are cooped up in a single apartment. The inhabitants band together to resist eviction by their landlord, who wants to redevelop the land for even greater profit. The claustrophobic images and the residents' restricted movement reveal the gulf of income disparity between those with access and the marginalised. *Cageman* can be seen as a microcosm of contemporary Hong Kong, with its exploration of the housing crisis, poverty, community and displacement. Its core theme of man versus society provides a framework to approach the rest of the films in the lineup, asking: what happens to those who fall through the cracks in cities that prioritise rapid urbanisation?

In the campus satire set in 1970s Delhi, *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* (1985), directed by Pradip Krishen and written by Booker Prize-winning novelist Arundhati Roy, we follow a group of architecture students expressing their restless idealism against systemic conformity. The film playfully functions as an institutional critique of the hierarchical authorities that seek to punish and suppress the dissent of the rebellious hippie collective, who harbour eccentric and grand proposals of social change and deurbanisation. Just like *Cageman*, we see the camaraderie of Annie and his guitar-strumming friends find solace and form a deep bond within cramped university hostels, which serve as a site of refuge against the pressures of wider society.

Set in Czechoslovakia, *Panelstory, or How a Housing Development Is Born* (1979) by Czech New Wave filmmaker Věra Chytilová takes a macro view of the tension between individuals and state failures. It provides a snapshot of a day in the life of a community living on the construction site of a partially finished housing development in Prague. The film's jazzy and avant-garde approach to editing and sound design captures the frenetic lives of tenants young and old, who adapt to the incessant chaos of constant construction. In contrast with the prior two films, *Panelstory*'s barrage of images and noise perpetuates a constant feeling of unrest and uncertainty. The characters live in proximity but in isolation, seeking connection yet encountering friction with one another over the state's failed promise of socialism.

Moving from the collective to the personal, both *My Name Ain't Suzie* (1985), directed by Angie Chen, and *Macho Dancer* (1988), by renowned Filipino filmmaker Lino Brocka, explore the lives of individuals migrating from rural areas to the city, navigating the harsh world of sex work and exploitation. The story of *My Name Ain't Suzie* spans three decades as we follow a teenager from a fishing village entering the red-light industry in postwar Hong Kong to escape poverty. *Macho Dancer* centres on a similar journey in '80s Manila, where a young man moves to the city and becomes a male sex worker to support his family back home. While the first film explores the complex bonds of female solidarity and women's resilience through the female gaze, *Macho Dancer* interrogates the objectification of young men in a bleak patriarchal underworld. Both portray the city as a set of huge institutional forces with powers that are continuously enacted and enforced on the marginalised.

The section concludes with *Amores Perros* (2000), the feature debut by acclaimed Mexican filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu. Three stories of social and class divide, violence and human connection are connected by a fatal car crash. The socioeconomic strata of Mexico City are represented through three distinct locales: a working-class neighbourhood, a high-rise apartment and a derelict town on the outskirts. By the end of *Amores Perros*, it appears that the desolate expanse beyond the city offers reprieve from harsh realities.

Seen as a whole, these films in Landmark emphasise how the architecture of a city bleeds into that of everyday life. The negotiation of space for commerce, for communing and even for survival is dictated by the structures that continue to shape the individuals inhabiting them, whether implicitly or explicitly. As the films shine a light on these systems, we hope they might help us notice those falling through the cracks and resist the machinery that co-opts them.



Opening Film

Cageman
籠民

Hong Kong. 150 mins. NC16 (Coarse Language). Southeast Asian Premiere. 1992.

LANGUAGE Cantonese
SUBTITLES English, Chinese
DIRECTOR Jacob Cheung
PRODUCER Jacob Cheung
CAST Roy Chiao, Liu Kai-Chi, Wong Ka-Kui

SCREENING **OT**
22 OCT, THURS, 5:30pm | 150 mins +Q&A

In Hong Kong's squalid tenements, low-income "cagemen" live in bunk beds separated by chicken wire, forming an intimate camaraderie within their cramped shared space. When news of a planned eviction arrives, the media, police, lawyers and politicians, each with their own agendas, descend upon the community. The residents must decide whether to relent or resist.

Inspired by a fatal fire in a cage home in 1990, Jacob Cheung casts a sympathetic eye on the plight of those most impacted by the city's corrupt bureaucracy and capitalism, while recognising their humour and resilience.

Naturalistic performances and authentic dialogue from an ensemble cast breathe life into the endearing, good-natured characters. With long takes that highlight the claustrophobia and clamour of the environs, *Cageman* is an immersive portrayal of cage homes. It is a humanistic work that celebrates communal spirit and agency while gently indicting opportunistic and hypocritical authority figures.

Cageman is one of the films under M+ Restored, an initiative supported by M+'s Major Partner, CHANEL.



Special Presentation

Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India

India. 224 mins. PG. Southeast Asian Premiere. 2001.

LANGUAGE Hindi
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Ashutosh Gowariker
PRODUCER Aamir Khan
CAST Aamir Khan, Gracy Singh, Rachel Shelly, Paul Blackthorne

SCREENING **GVV**
23 OCT, FRI, 6pm | 224 mins +Q&A

In the town of Champaner in Central India, a farmer, Bhuvan, hastily assembles eleven players to form a cricket team before the season commences. His unorthodox recruitment process soon puts together a ragtag team, with the commanding officer's sister as their coach who teaches them the game rules. Their hope is to beat the British team in order to avoid paying the high taxes (lagaan) levied on them. But before the first ball's bowl, suspicion and sabotage threaten to unravel Bhuvan's team.

Ashutosh Gowariker stages the three-day match as a sweeping ensemble piece, following each player's redemption through interpersonal strife. These range from rekindled rivalries to caste prejudice which threaten to splinter the team. By the end of the games, individual wins are celebrated as communal triumph in this classic sports epic.

Amores Perros

A fatal car crash links three strangers' lives: a young man entering the world of dogfighting, a supermodel whose life is derailed after the accident, and an ex-guerrilla trying to reconcile with his past.

Mexico. 154 mins. M18 (Intimate Scenes). Singapore Premiere. 2000.

LANGUAGE Spanish
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Alejandro González Iñárritu
PRODUCER Alejandro González Iñárritu
CAST Emilio Echevarría, Gael García Bernal, Goya Toledo

SCREENING **OT**
24 OCT, SAT, 10:30am | 154 mins

SCREENING **OT**
1 NOV, SUN, 7:30pm | 154 mins

In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones

In this campus satire set in 1970s Delhi, a ragtag group of architecture students express their restless idealism against a system that rewards conformity and punishes dissent.

India. 112 mins. PG13 (Some Coarse Language). Southeast Asian Premiere. 1989.

LANGUAGE English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Pradip Krishen
PRODUCER Pradip Krishen
CAST Roshan Seth, Arjun Raina, Arundhati Roy, Shah Rukh Khan

SCREENING **OT**
25 OCT, SUN, 1:30pm | 112 mins +Q&A

Macho Dancer

Pol moves from the countryside to Manila in hopes of earning more money in the flesh industry. Amid the city's chaos, he learns about the harsh yet alluring male prostitution business.

Philippines. 133 mins. R21 (Sexual Scenes and Homosexual Content). Singapore Premiere. 1988.

LANGUAGE Tagalog, English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Lino Brocka
PRODUCER Boy C. De Guia
CAST Allan Paule, Daniel Fernando, Jacklyn Jose

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SCREENING **OT**
31 OCT, SAT, 7pm | 133 mins

My Name Ain't Suzie
花街時代

Shui Mei leaves her fishing village for the city, attracted by the seemingly glamorous life of a prostitute. Across three decades, from the raucous heyday of bars serving foreign soldiers to their quiet wane, she defiantly forges her own path.

Hong Kong. 103 mins. NC16 (Some Nudity and Violence). Southeast Asian Premiere. 1985.

LANGUAGE Cantonese, Mandarin, English
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Angie Chen
PRODUCER Shaw Brothers
CAST Pat Ha, Deanie Ip, Anthony Wong

SCREENING **OT**
27 OCT, TUES, 8:30pm | 103 mins +Q&A

SCREENING **OT**
30 OCT, FRI, 4pm | 103 mins

PanelStory, or How a Housing Development Is Born
Panelstory, aneb jak se rodí sídliště

A curious old man weaves his way across a labyrinthine housing estate. Through a dizzying exploration of neighbourly happenings in a public housing complex near Prague, the film forms an allegory for the complex dynamics of community-building.

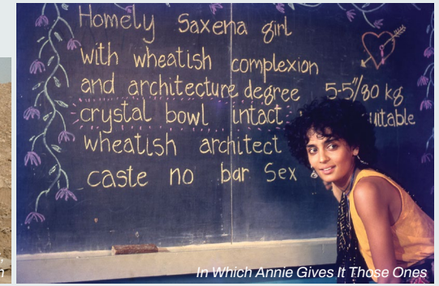
Czechoslovakia. 101 mins. NC16 (Some Sexual Scenes). Southeast Asian Premiere. 1979.

LANGUAGE Czech
SUBTITLES English
DIRECTOR Věra Chytilová
PRODUCER Filmové studio Barrandov
CAST Lukáš Bech, Antonín Vaňha, Eva Kačírková

SCREENING **OT**
31 OCT, SAT, 11am | 101 mins +Q&A


My Name Ain't Suzie


PanelStory, or How a Housing Development Is Born



In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones


Amores Perros


Macho Dancer



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Forum

Comprising panels and exclusive dialogue sessions open to all audiences, Forum is a platform for filmmakers and industry visionaries to engage in dynamic discussions and a robust exchange of ideas.

The slate of programmes aims to bring film-lovers and creators closer together, delving deep into evolving cinematic cultures and the artistry behind the silver screen.

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Hirokazu Koreeda

The Festival is proud to present an exclusive conversation with this year's SGIFF Cinema Honorary Award recipient, Hirokazu Koreeda—a leading figure in Japanese cinema renowned for his deeply humanist works and naturalistic, observational storytelling.

Koreeda will reflect on his acclaimed filmmaking journey that spans over three decades. The films he will talk about include his latest, *Look Back* (2026), a Special Presentation in the Horizon section, his feature film breakthroughs like *Maborosi* (1995) and *After Life* (1998), internationally acclaimed works like *Nobody Knows* (2004), *Still Walking* (2008) and *Shoplifters* (2018), and his overseas productions like *The Truth* (2019) and *Broker* (2022).

Examining core themes of memory, grief and unconventional family dynamics on the fringes of society, Koreeda masterfully blends documentary-like realism with gentle human drama that subverts traditional melodrama. Don't miss this rare opportunity to gain insights from a master filmmaker who continues to inspire generations of cinephiles.

INTERVIEWER Boo Junfeng, Filmmaker and Chairperson of SGIFF
LANGUAGE Conducted in Japanese with English interpretation
TICKET $10



EVENT **NMS**
24 OCT, SAT, 1:30pm | 120 mins

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Aamir Khan

Join us in an exclusive conversation with this year's SGIFF Screen Icon Award recipient, Aamir Khan—an influential and acclaimed actor, director and producer in Indian cinema.

Renowned for his dedication to craft and socially conscious storytelling, Khan will reflect on his stellar career in cinema over four decades. Possessing one of the most commercially impactful and critically acclaimed filmographies in Indian cinema history, he has reshaped global perceptions of Indian cinema—from founding Aamir Khan Productions to steering Oscar-nominated epics and record-breaking blockbusters.

Khan made his directorial debut with the critically acclaimed *Taare Zameen Par* (2007), as well as produced and starred in the epic *Lagaan* (2001), which earned an Academy Award nomination. Khan has received four National Film Awards and nine Filmfare Awards in his career.

Don't miss this rare opportunity to gain insights from a global screen icon whose performances, work ethic and dedication to cinema continue to inspire fans all over the world.

INTERVIEWER Rishi Budhrani, Host and Actor
LANGUAGE Conducted in English
TICKET $10



EVENT **MBSSGB**
22 OCT, THURS, 6pm | 120 mins

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Anthony Wong

Join the conversation with Hong Kong veteran actor Anthony Wong Chau-sang, who has starred in over 150 titles since *My Name Ain't Suzie* (1985), which kick-started his career. A familiar face in Hong Kong cinema, he is known for his roles in *The Untold Story* (1993), *Beast Cops* (1998), the *Infernal Affairs* trilogy (2002–2003) and *Still Human* (2018).

Famed for his accomplished and versatile performances, he is the first Hong Kong actor to have won Best Actor awards in film, television and theatre. His honours include multiple Best Actor and Best Supporting Actor awards at the Hong Kong Film Awards, the Hong Kong Film Critics Society Awards, the Golden Bauhinia Awards and the Golden Horse Awards.

In this exclusive dialogue session, Wong will share insights about his illustrious four-decade-long acting career, his creative pursuits across different mediums, and how he continues to thrive in an evolving global entertainment industry.

INTERVIEWER Tay Ping Hui, Director and Actor
LANGUAGE Conducted in Mandarin with English interpretation
TICKET $10



EVENT **SAT**
29 OCT, THU, 7pm | 90 mins

IN CONVERSATION WITH

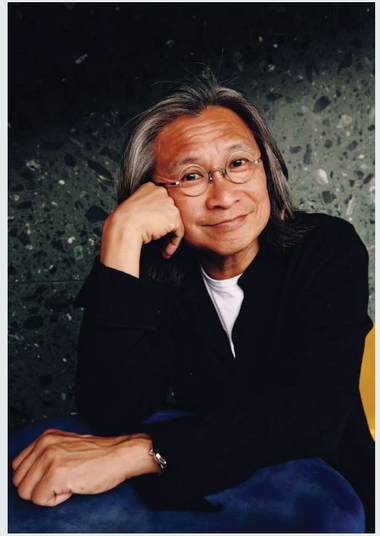
Peter Chan

The Festival is delighted to present a dialogue with Peter Ho-sun Chan, a leading figure in contemporary Chinese-language cinema and the first director to have won three major directing awards at the Hong Kong Film Awards, Golden Horse Awards and Golden Rooster Awards.

Emerging during Hong Kong's golden age of cinema, Chan co-founded United Filmmakers Organization (UFO) in 1991, and directed iconic urban melodramas such as *Comrades, Almost a Love Story* (1996). His vision later expanded internationally with DreamWorks' *The Love Letter* (1999) and pan-Asian production company Applause Pictures. By directing acclaimed blockbusters like *Perhaps Love* (2005), *The Warlords* (2007) and *Wu Xia* (2011), Chan seamlessly blends commercial appeal, genre storytelling and artistic vision.

In this exclusive dialogue session, Chan will share insights into his four-decade filmic legacy, and how he continues to be an advocate for the Chinese-language film industry and broader pan-Asian collaborations.

INTERVIEWER Eva Tang, Film Director, Producer and Writer
LANGUAGE Conducted in English
TICKET $10



EVENT **MBSSGB**
22 OCT, THU, 9pm | 90 mins

IN CONVERSATION WITH

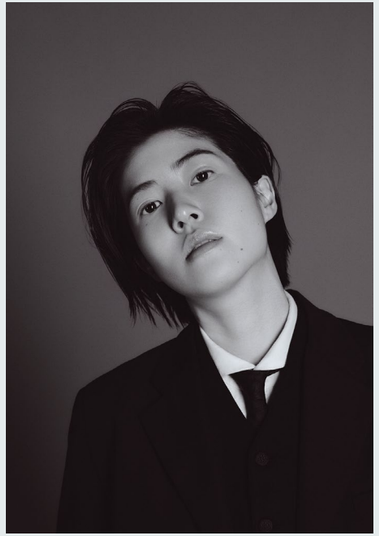
Shim Eun-kyung

Join us in conversation with Shim Eun-kyung, an acclaimed South Korean actress who has built a distinctive, boundary-crossing career in both South Korea and Japan.

Beginning her career at age nine as one of Korean television's most prominent child actors, Shim earned the Best Actress award at the Baeksang Arts Awards for her role in *Miss Granny* (2014). After expanding her work to Japan, she made history as the first Korean actor to win Best Actress at the Japan Academy Film Prize for *The Journalist* (2019). Most recently, her acclaimed performance in *Two Seasons, Two Strangers* (2025), which clinched the Golden Leopard at Locarno, won her Best Actress at Japan's Kinema Junpo Best Ten Awards.

In this exclusive dialogue session, Shim will share insights into her evolution as a performer working across borders and languages, and how she continues to forge a singular path as a generation-defining actress.

INTERVIEWER He Shuming, Director and Screenwriter
LANGUAGE Conducted in Korean with English interpretation
TICKET $10



EVENT **NMS**
22 OCT, THU, 5pm | 90 mins

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Eugene Kotlyarenko, Kiko Mizuhara and Cole Sprouse

Step inside the world of director Eugene Kotlyarenko and acclaimed stars Kiko Mizuhara and Cole Sprouse as they unpack the stylistic influences and creative drive behind their craft. Kotlyarenko will present insights into his filmmaking strategies that bridge the contemporary digital mind with cinema at the forefront of storytelling. Multitalented actors Mizuhara and Sprouse will reflect on their artistic journeys and performing careers, including their collaboration on Kotlyarenko's latest feature, Vintage Violence, which will also be SGIFF's Festival Closing film.

Whether you are a passionate film enthusiast or an aspiring creator, this exclusive dialogue session promises a meaningful exploration of contemporary indie cinema, modern screen culture, the artistry of performance, and the collaborative creative process behind bringing a bold cinematic vision to life on screen.

HOST AND MODERATOR Rebecca Lim, Actor and Ambassador of 37th SGIFF; Thong Kay Wee, Programme Director, SGIFF
LANGUAGE English
TICKET $10



EVENT **NMS**
31 OCT, SAT, 11am | 90 mins

Acting in Singapore, Acting from Singapore

We see them on our screens, but do we know what they really *feel*? Join some of our most beloved local film actors as they go off-script and spill the tea on what it truly takes to build an acting career in Singapore.

In this candid roundtable moderated by veteran actor Janice Koh, performers behind iconic Singaporean films share what they look for in directorial collaborations, the dream roles they are still waiting to play, and the conscious choices they make as a Singaporean actor performing for local and international audiences.

If the film industry has ever felt like a mysterious black box, this session offers an intimate, honest look behind the curtain at what it means to act—and belong—here today.

HOST AND MODERATOR Janice Koh, Actor and Vocal Coach
PANELIST Daisy Irani, Fir Rahman, Lim Shi-An, Oon Shu An, Tay Ping Hui
LANGUAGE English
TICKET Free with registration

EVENT **LF**
27 OCT, TUES, 6:30pm | 90 mins



Left to Right: Janice Koh, Daisy Irani, Fir Rahman, Lim Shi-An, Oon Shu An, Tay Ping Hui

Daisy Irani is a veteran media executive, creative director and acclaimed actress with over three decades of experience. Widely recognised as Daisy in Singapore's landmark sitcom *Under One Roof*, her screen credits also include short films and features. She was a former Vice President at Mediacorp, and is presently the founder and creative director of HuM Theatre.

Fir Rahman is an actor with over two decades' experience in local and regional theatre, film and television. He is most recognised as the lead actor in Apprentice, which premiered at Cannes' Un Certain Regard in 2016. Fir was the first Singaporean to be nominated as Best Newcomer in acting at Hong Kong's 2017 Asian Film Awards. In 2026, he was named Best Supporting Actor at the Asian Academy Creative Awards for his role in the series *Durrani – Perjuangan Lion Mum*.

Lim Shi-An is a 28-year-old actress. Her notable TVcredits include Mediacorp's Alienated and Come Closer. She has starred in several short films including the award-winning *Motherland* as well as *Full Month*, which premiered at Sundance. Her first feature film, *Amoeba*, premiered at Toronto. Most recently, she was the female lead in Nelson Yeo's genre-bending feature, *The House on the Moon*, which premiered at Locarno and is currently screening at SGIFF.

Oon Shu An is an actor, writer, host and advocate whose work spans theatre, film and TV. An associate artist with Checkpoint Theatre and a board member of socially engaged theatre company Drama Box, her recent stage credits include *The Christians*, *God of Carnage* and *MONSTRESS*. Her TV credits include *Marco Polo*, *Code of Law* and *How To Be A Good Girl* for which she won Best Actress at the Asian Academy Creative Awards in 2018.

Tay Ping Hui is an award-winning Singaporean actor and filmmaker whose career spans television, film and theatre. Since his acting debut in 1998, he has been a prominent figure in Singapore's entertainment industry, known for his versatile performances across languages. He subsequently expanded his career into China, appearing in major productions including *Handsome Siblings* and *Legend of the Condor Heroes*. Beyond acting, he also directed the feature film, *Meeting the Giant*.

Transforming the Local

What makes a Singaporean film feel culturally authentic when it's made with international money and stars?

Singapore has always been a crossroads of cultures and global influences. As local cinema grows alongside the expansion of the media industry and an evolving national identity, filmmakers must navigate the tension between international commercial success, creative freedom and staying true to home.

In this session, Professor Lim Song Hwee breaks down the rising phenomenon of Singapore-Taiwan co-productions to reveal how overseas funding, talent and distribution are quietly reshaping local cinema. Following the presentation, he will be joined by a panel of film industry insiders to dive into the state of Singapore cinema, the reality of making movies today and what truly gives a film its local soul.

HOST AND MODERATOR Sim Jiaying, SGIFF Film Programmer and Lecturer
PANELIST Lim Song Hwee, Fran Borgia, Koo Chia Meng, Kirsten Tan
LANGUAGE English
TICKET Free with registration

EVENT **LF**
28 OCT, WED, 6:30pm | 90 mins



Left to Right: Sim Jiaying, Lim Song Hwee, Fran Borgia, Koo Chia Meng, Kirsten Tan

Lim Song Hwee is Distinguished Professor at the Graduate Institute of Taiwan Literature and Transnational Cultural Studies, National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan. He is the author of *Taiwan Cinema as Soft Power: Authorship, Transnationality, Historiography* (2022), among others. His current research project is "Geopolitics and Transnational Cinemas: Focusing on Connections between 21st Century Taiwan Cinema and Southeast Asia," funded by Taiwan's National Science and Technology Council.

Fran Borgia is the founder of Akanga Film Asia. He has produced numerous critically acclaimed films, including *A Land Imagined* (2018), which won the Golden Leopard at the Locarno Film Festival. His producing credits include *Yuni* (Toronto Platform Prize 2021), *Tiger Stripes* (Cannes Critics' Week Grand Prize 2023), *Stranger Eyes* (Venice Main Competition 2024), *Village Rockstars 2* (Busan Jiseok Award 2024), *Renoir* (Cannes Main Competition 2025), *Amoeba* (Toronto Discovery 2025 / APSA Best Youth Feature Film), and *Not a Hero* (Berlinale Generation 2026). He is currently pursuing a PhD focused on Poetic Cinema at Auckland University of Technology (AUT).

Trained as a filmmaker, **Koo Chia Meng** has been actively involved in various aspects of film production since 2009. He co-founded his production company Fiction Shore in 2013, and subsequently completed his Master of Fine Arts in Film Directing at the Taipei National University of the Arts in 2019. As Casting Director, Chia Meng worked on Singaporean feature films such as He Shuming's *Ajoomma* (2022), Boo Junfeng's *Trinity* (2026), as well as Anthony Chen's *Growing Up Trilogy*, which concluded with *We Are All Strangers* (2026). Chia Meng also facilitates performance workshops with emerging filmmakers and actors to broaden industry engagement.

Kirsten Tan is a New York-based Singaporean filmmaker whose debut feature, *Pop Aye*, won major awards at Sundance, Rotterdam, and Zurich and was selected as Singapore's official entry for the Academy Awards. Her short films have received multiple accolades at the Singapore International Film Festival. A Sundance Institute and Cannes Cinéfondation Fellow, Kirsten holds an MFA from New York University, fully supported by the Tisch Graduate Fellowship. She has received the NAC Young Artist Award, Her World's Young Woman Achiever of the Year Award, and was nominated for The Straits Times' Singaporean of the Year.

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SGIFF Pro

The next wave of industry trailblazers in Asia and Southeast Asia will be launched here at SGIFF Pro.

SGIFF Pro is the professional platform of the Singapore International Film Festival, bringing together various industry initiatives under one umbrella to meet the evolving and complex demands of the film industry. It comprises five programmes: the SGIFF Industry Days conference, the Asian Producers Network, the Pitching Forum, Off Campus, and Parallax.

Industry Days

Industry Days is SGIFF Pro's flagship conference event and knowledge-building programme, tailored for and by film professionals from Singapore, Southeast Asia and beyond.

Over four days of panel discussions, talks and curated B2B networking events, Industry Days gathers film professionals and key decision-makers from across disciplines and territories to engage with questions of craft, creative practices and the business of independent cinema.

Industry Days is an initiative supported by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Institut français as part of the strategy to promote the international export of cultural and creative industries. The event is also generously supported by our Official Patron, the Ngee Ann Kongsi.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Screenwriters Roundtable

27 Oct, Tue | 11:15-12:30 | 75 min | Panel

Three writer-directors from this year's Asian Feature Film Competition lineup—Ang Geck Geck, Kamila Andini and Yashasvi Juyal—discuss their filmmaking journeys from page to screen.

Visionary Encounters: Scenes from a Menage: Tom Harari on Making Genre Films With His Brother

28 Oct, Weds | 15:15-16:30 | 75 min | Talk

In Singapore with Cannes competition title *The Unknown*, directed by his younger brother Arthur and for which he served as cinematographer, Tom Harari will analyse how he transposed a scene from a graphic novel into a live-action film.

Big Ideas: Structuring Asian-American Co-production

29 Oct, Thurs | 11:15-12:30 | 75 min | Panel

With experiences at Warner Bros, Disney+ and HBO, two of the most experienced film and TV executives in Asia, Jessica Kam-Engle and Ellen R. Eliasoph, are here to share their evaluation of the industry landscape between Asia and the U.S. amid a globalised content system.

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Akiko Ashizawa | Japan
Cinematographer



Ellen R. Eliasoph | Los Angeles
President and Lead Producer,
Starry Dome Productions



João Gonzalez | Portugal
Director and Composer,
COLA Animation



Parallax

Parallax is a newly launched series of talks and demonstrations that explore the shifting boundaries between cinema, technology and new forms of storytelling.

Free to attend and held over two days, the programme gathers filmmakers, artists, industry leaders, legal practitioners and researchers to examine how moving images are being reshaped by technology from conception to circulation. They explore emerging tools and production workflows alongside ethical considerations and their impact on creative labour and authorship. At its heart, the programme asks: what remains distinctly human in the making of a film, and what role should technology play in it?

Parallax is an initiative supported by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Institut français as part of the strategy to promote the international export of the cultural and creatives industries, and supported by the Embassy of Switzerland in Singapore.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Programme Highlights Voooooo—Peeeeee—

23 Oct, Fri | 12:00 – 18:00 | VR Showcase
24 Oct, Sat | 10:00 – 18:00
White Room, Esplanade

Immerse yourself in this multisensory XR experience by Ubac Studio where a woman discovers her body has become hollow after being reconstructed as data.

Beyond the Screen: The Future, Revisited

24 Oct, Sat | 14:15 – 15:15 | Panel
Theatre Studio, Esplanade

Explore what makes new entertainment work as Sten Saluveer from Telia Estonia and Jay Kim from SM Entertainment's Studio Realive revisit the possibilities they championed at Cannes Next and BIFAN XR.

Lights, Camera, AI: From Production to Post

24 Oct, Sat | 16:45 – 17:45 | Panel
Theatre Studio, Esplanade

Filmmaking runs on creative judgment, collaboration and a great many deadlines. Join Rebeca Cervantes from Amazon MGM Studios and Chetan Shah from Adobe Inc. as they explore where AI earns its keep.

SGIFF Film Fund

The SGIFF Film Fund is back as a critical piece of funding infrastructure for Southeast Asian independent filmmaking. It returns with a deepened partnership with the Tan Ean Kiam Foundation, a supporter of the Fund since 2018, now coming on board as lead funder of both grants from 2026 to 2029. SGIFF offers two grants for Southeast Asian film projects.

Catch past grant recipients at the festival!

Submissions for the 2026 SGIFF Film Fund will open soon. For details, visit sgiff.com/sgiff-film-fund



TOP LEFT

On Memories of Countless Days Away by Liao Jiekai and Elysa Wendi

TOP RIGHT

Golden Island by Arief Budiman

BOTTOM LEFT

Baby Jackfruit, Baby Guava by Nông Nhật Quang

BOTTOM RIGHT

Singapore God by EXYL

TAN EAN KIAM FOUNDATION | SGIFF | SOUTHEAST ASIAN DOCUMENTARY GRANT

TAN EAN KIAM FOUNDATION | SGIFF | SOUTHEAST ASIAN SHORT FILM GRANT

Tan Ean Kiam Foundation–SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant (SEA-DOC)

SEA-DOC now focuses on the last mile, with three grants of S$10,000 each going to feature documentaries in the late edit or near-completion stage, helping filmmakers with the final push to realise their vision. The grant champions films that surface underserved voices and overlooked realities across Southeast Asia, and those that can spark wider public conversation.

Tan Ean Kiam Foundation–SGIFF Southeast Asian Short Film Grant (SEA-SHORTS)

A launchpad for the region's brightest emerging filmmakers, SEA-SHORTS backs bold short-form work across genres. The grant has doubled in reach, now supporting **six** projects in each cycle, with each title receiving a production grant of S$10,000.



Pitching Forum

The SGIFF Pro Pitching Forum is the centrepiece and culminating event of SGIFF Pro, the festival's professional hub bringing together various industry initiatives under one umbrella. A platform for the region's most promising feature film projects, the Pitching Forum is where meaningful coproduction conversations become real.

Held on 30 October, the Pitching Forum will have three sessions:

Session A: International Pitches seeking Singapore or Southeast Asia coproduction
Session B: Singapore Pitches seeking international coproduction
Session C: APN+ Pitching Forum

To see this year's participants, visit SGIFF.com/SGIFF-Pro for more information.

Asian Producers Network

Held from 26 to 31 October 2026, the Asian Producers Network is a six-day producer development workshop and guided mentorship programme supporting the sustainable development of independent film producers.

Open to producers from across Asia, the programme admits a cohort of 12 to 15 participants for structured engagement with project development methodology, international financing strategy and co-production practice.

This year's edition will consist of two programme tracks:
1. **THE APN TRACK**, which includes the full Asian Producers Network curriculum,
2. **THE APN+ TRACK**, which includes both the Asian Producers Network curriculum and the APN+ Pitching Forum.

INSTITUT FRANÇAIS | AMBASSADE DE FRANCE À SINGAPOUR | THE NGEE ANN KONGSI | SONY



Image Credit: Clarence Aw

Singapore Film Week

22—31 Oct 2026

Participating Organisations

IFS Centre for Photography and Film

Singapore International Film Festival

*SCAPE

Ticketing Information

Our Ticket Prices

$25
Festival Opening and Festival Closing

$20
Special Presentation

$20
Junior Explorers Combo

$20
Undercurrent Performances

$15
General Film Ticket

$10
In Conversation With (Forum)

*All ticket discounts apply only to regular ticket prices and exclude the Festival Opening, Festival Closing and Special Presentations. Please note that only one discount can be used per transaction.

Complimentary tickets are not applicable to the Festival Opening, Festival Closing, Special Presentations and Junior Explorers Combo.

Junior Explorers Combo

This combo is only applicable to our Junior Explorers relaxed screenings. For more info on these screenings, please refer to page [p. 56].

Each purchase admits 1 adult and 1 child below 16 years of age. Each child must be accompanied by an adult.

Undercurrent Performances

Our Undercurrent section opens with live performances and expanded cinema—available for sale at $20 each.

“Got discount?” We’ve got you.

Level up your festival experience with our Festival Passes and ticket concessions.

SGIFFriends*

Donate $10 and above to enjoy 15% off regular ticket prices.

Donate $400 and above to receive the coveted SGIFFriends Pass that gives you full festival access. Join us as an SGIFFriend via donate.sgiff.com

Industry Pass*

All Industry Passholders receive 10% off regular ticket prices. Four-Day Industry Passholders receive an additional 2 complimentary tickets for online purchases. Join SGIFF Industry Days by purchasing a 1-Day + Pitching Forum or 4-Day + Pitching Forum Industry Pass now via SGIFF.com/industry-days.

Concession

Students, National Servicemen, and senior citizens (55 years old and above) enjoy a $2 discount off regular ticket prices. Verification will be conducted at the door.

Ticketing Self-Help Guide

Not sure how our tickets and film screenings work? Don't fret, we're here to help.

Where can I book tickets?

Tickets are only available online via SGIFF.COM. It's best to purchase your tickets early to secure a seat. There are no door sales, except for limited Rush Queue tickets at screening venues.

Why is a programme marked as "Unavailable" on SGIFF.COM?

If the "unavailable" status appears while you are booking your ticket, it is possible that your booking has passed the cut-off time, seats are filling fast, or you do not have an eligible pass to book a ticket. Should this occur, you can:

- Check SGIFF.COM for daily ticketing updates to verify if tickets are still available.
- Notify SGIFF by sending us a message through Facebook or Instagram.
- Purchase an Industry Pass to access Industry Days programmes.
- Email ticketing@sgiff.com for assistance.

What if I'm late for the screening?

If you've bought or booked a ticket, you will have a 10-minute grace period after the screening start time.

If you haven't checked in at the screening after the grace period, your ticket will be forfeited and your seat will be offered to the Rush Queue. In order to catch the screening, you will need to join the Rush Queue (see below).

Passholders who arrive after the screening starts will also be asked to join the Rush Queue (see below).

Twenty minutes after the screening starts, entry will no longer be permitted.

To avoid having your ticket forfeited, it's best to arrive early!

What is the Rush Queue and how does it work?

Try your luck at the Rush Queue for sold-out screenings.

Ten minutes after a screening start time, no-show seats will be released to those in the Rush Queue on a first-come, first-served basis.

Passholders who arrive after the screening starts will also have to join the Rush Queue.

The Rush Queue opens 30 minutes before the screening starts.

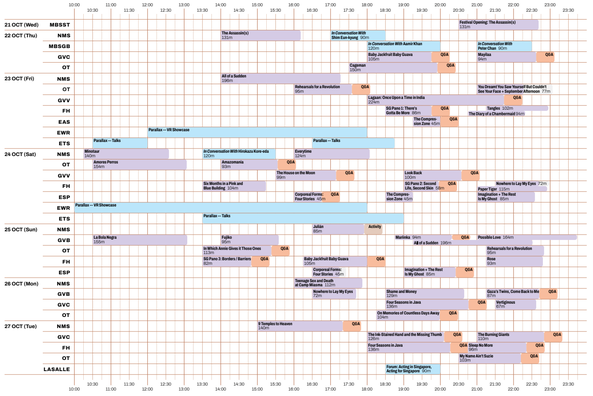
Each person in the queue is entitled to one ticket only.

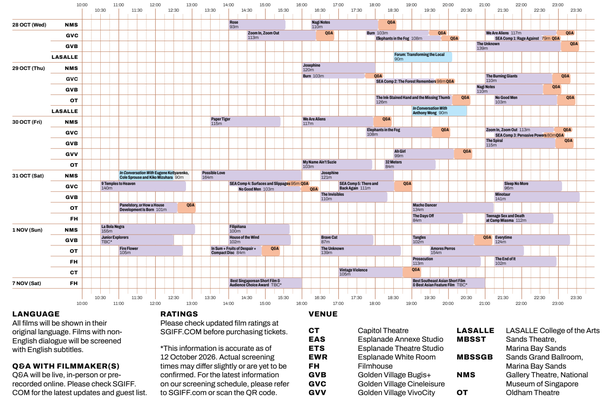
Entry is based on ticket availability and is not guaranteed.

What is the refund and cancellation policy?

All film tickets are non-refundable and non-exchangeable. A refund will only be made for screenings that are cancelled or rescheduled.

For a more comprehensive guide on how to make the most of the festival, please visit SGIFF.com/how-to-fest





LANGUAGE

All films will be shown in their original language. Films with non-English dialogue will be screened with English subtitles.

Q&A WITH FILMMAKER(S)

Q&A will be live, in-person or pre-recorded online. Please check SGIFF.COM for the latest updates and guest list.

RATINGS

Please check updated film ratings at SGIFF.COM before purchasing tickets.

*This information is accurate as of 12 October 2026. Actual screening times may differ slightly or are yet to be confirmed. For the latest information on our screening schedule, please refer to SGIFF.com or scan the QR code.

VENUE

CT	Capitol Theatre
EAS	Esplanade Annexe Studio
ETS	Esplanade Theatre Studio
EWR	Esplanade White Room
FH	Filmhouse
GVB	Golden Village Bugis+
GVC	Golden Village Cineleisure
GVV	Golden Village VivoCity
LASALLE	LASALLE College of the Arts
MBSST	Sands Theatre, Marina Bay Sands
MBSSGB	Sands Grand Ballroom, Marina Bay Sands
NMS	Gallery Theatre, National Museum of Singapore
OT	Oldham Theatre

Vote for the Audience Choice Award

Your vote matters. To boost support for the local film industry, the Audience Choice Award is only open to Singaporean films or films with Singaporean co-production.

Cast your vote* by scanning the QR code on the cinema screen or visiting sgiff.com. The Audience Choice Award will go to the film with the most votes, and it will enjoy an encore screening on 7 November 2026.

*Note: Only the first screening of the following films will be eligible for voting.

Which film do you think deserves to be more widely seen? Vote now.

Asian Feature Film Competition

9 Temples to Heaven
Ah Girl
Four Seasons in Java
The Burning Giants

Horizon

Filipiñana
Nagi Notes

Foreground

Sleep No More
The House on the Moon

Undercurrent

On Memories of Countless Days Away

Singapore Panorama

SHORT FILM PROGRAMME 1

Everything's Peachy
It's Not Sweet
Adrift / A Rift
Daphne as Woman (Crying)
Low-Hanging Fruit
Singaporeans at Gyeongbokgung Palace
Coast to Coast

SHORT FILM PROGRAMME 2

Son of a Dazing Gaze
Her Silence
What Remains at Dawn

SHORT FILM PROGRAMME 3

Kiss Me Climax
Subterranea
REANIMATOR
Orang Minyak
Encik

Festival Passes

Find the best pass for your film festival needs by comparing our perks at a glance in the table below.

	Festival Opening/ Festival Closing/ Special Presentations	Regular Film Screenings	In Conversation With	SGIFF Industry Days	Network Parties	Festival Lounge
SGIFFriends Pass Donate $400 and above as an SGIFFriend*! T&Cs apply. Visit donate.sgiff.com.	✓ On an RSVP basis	✓ Unlimited access*	✓	✓	✓ Exclusive SGIFF events	✓
Industry Pass 4-days and 1-day passes available for sale for SGIFF Industry Days.	✓	✓ 10% off all regular-priced tickets. 2 complimentary tickets for 4-Day passholders.	×	✓	×	✓
Cinephile Pass Open call for applications via sgiff.com. Donate $50 upon successful application.	×	✓ 3 complimentary tickets, plus Rush Queue access.	✓ Rush Queue only	×	✓ By invite only	✓
Undercurrent Pass (NEW!) All-access passes to Undercurrent programmes available for sale at $50.	×	✓ Undercurrent programmes only, including live performances	×	×	×	×

Essays

126 The Ruptures
132 Adults Suck, Don't They?
138 Too Near, Too Far: The Gap in Archival Imagery
144 You Love, You Labour, You Lose
150 Mutata Figura
156 Inside And Outside the Cinema of Care

by Kong Rithdee | Features Editor

These six specially commissioned essays explore some of the aesthetic, conceptual, and social themes that course through the films in this year's selection. Our writers muse on shape-shifting realities, bad parenting, gory greed, cinematic empathy, the depths of archival imagery, and the joys and horrors of bodily construction. Because reading about films is as important as watching films in this age of snap judgments, we hope these essays will enrich your festival experience even after the screening is over.

Cici Peng

*Best read after having seen the films

THE RUPTURES

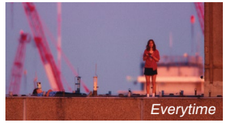


Everytime

First came fire. This new technology not only ruptured the darkness for prehistoric man, but cast shadows – moving images – across cave walls, producing intangible doubles of the visible world. In the nineteenth century, photography was born, crystallising the past into a single instance: an indexical, frozen trace of a reality that had already disappeared. Then cinema arrived, thawing the single image into reality in motion.

Every new technology has not only mediated our relationship to reality, but also reshaped our relationship to death. Ochre-stained handprints, film, digital pixels, VR, phone avatars, computer games, AI: images produced by successive technologies are paradoxically transient yet enduring. They leave traces that seem to say both *I was here* and *I am no longer here*. Every image preserves the undeniable presence of a person or thing while simultaneously testifying that this moment has already vanished. Cinema extends photography's indexical promise, while complicating this relationship to finality: movement appears to counter death. The persistent entanglement between reality, death and technology is one of the threads running across several films in this year's programme.

Do *ruptures* in images equal ruptures in life?



Everytime

In Austrian filmmaker Sandra Wollner's third feature *Everytime*, death emerges at random. After a night out with her boyfriend, Lux (Tristán López), the teenage Jessie (Carla Hüttermann) stands atop the roof of her Berlin apartment building, taking photographs on her phone. In a long shot, we see what appears to be Jessie's point-of-view camera pan slowly across the surrounding blocks: windows dimmed, curtains drawn, the city suspended in the silence of dawn. Then, suddenly, something terrible happens. The camera continues its slow pan across the treetops. The effect is at once devastating and banal. No one appears to notice. Wollner's stylised distance renders the death as both an absolute fact and something strangely unreal: the world continues spinning.

The next sequence ruptures this reality altogether. We are transported into a Minecraft forest: trees reduced to cuboids, the landscape pixelated, weightless, governed by an entirely different physics. Is this an afterlife, or merely another order of representation? The cut raises a more unsettling question: where does a life go once the body that anchored it to the visible world has disappeared, especially when so much of our lives happen in the ether of the internet? Throughout the film, Wollner questions how technology has ruptured our relationship to the past. Significantly, the film contains no conventional flashbacks. Instead, the filmmaker invokes the technologies through which fragments of it have been recorded.

Lux listens to old voice notes and scrolls through Jessie's camera roll. Jessie's mother Ella (Birgit Minichmayr) watches old DV home videos of Jessie as a toddler, while her sister Melli (Lotte Shirin Keiling) continues to message Jessie on WhatsApp. The characters seem increasingly able to access only those memories that have already been recorded. Paradoxically, the more technologies we possess for preserving the past, the more memory itself seems to atrophy.

On a cinematic level, the film's repeated images begin to accrue a ghostly presence. As Wollner repeatedly returns to landscapes that we last saw inhabited by Jessie, those spaces begin to register the eerie weight of her absence. In this way, Wollner destabilises the apparent objectivity of the cinematic image. A shot may ostensibly record the same place, but repetition alters its meaning entirely, as the apparent objectivity of the image collapses.



Zoom In, Zoom Out

From here, Wollner begins to warp the film's realist grammar. The typing indicator bubble suddenly comes to life in Melli and Jessie's WhatsApp chat; the Alexanderplatz television tower materialises impossibly in the reflection of a lighthouse in Tenerife. Each rupture remains ambiguous, yet together they slowly unpick the world governing the film's reality. By the final act, *Everytime* collapses narrative time and space in which cinema offers a way to materialise our innate yearning for the dead to return.

Is the separation of the real and the virtual increasingly meaningless?

Wollner's film is deeply concerned with the ways technology has transformed the preservation of memory, and still it only partially addresses the extent to which digital media has refigured the very architecture of Gen Z's interpersonal relationships.

In China, rapid technological changes have completely altered the fabric of social relationships within an increasingly competition-driven, atomised urban society. The artist Cao Fei was among the earliest Chinese practitioners in the 1990s to question the ways in which China's "Opening Up" reforms coincided with rapid urban development and new virtual realities which unsettled a social world previously structured through dense networks of kinship and relational filial duty.

Dong Jie's *Zoom In, Zoom Out* appears to catalyse *some of Cao Fei's earlier concerns. For the filmmaker*, there is little meaningful separation between virtual and physical worlds: the binary is continually dissolved as digital traces and material spaces become fused within the film's diegetic reality. The film centres on the disappearance of the protagonist Gao (Zhu Xin), setting in motion a detective narrative. In Gao's bedroom, his flatmate, Shi (Sunny Sun), discovers an online game world still running on his computer and begins to follow a series of clues scattered across an alternate universe of

avatars and barren, expansive landscapes that stand in stark contrast to the cramped, glass-walled apartments of their physical lives.

Shi finds traces of Gao's final digital activity in the virtual house he built for his avatar: a wooden bungalow in the forest, its walls lined with family photographs. The image offers a sly comment on the changing materiality of memory. After disappearance, and even after death, what remains of a life may no longer be concentrated in physical objects, but dispersed across untethered servers and online accounts. The archive appears strangely vulnerable: who knows how quickly inactive accounts are deactivated, and how would you even know another person's virtual landscape without their account login?

As Shi begins to inhabit Gao's avatar, he wanders across desolate online landscapes in which a glitch has rendered every other player invisible. The effect is eerily post-human: an apparently boundless world stripped of social presence, expansive yet utterly atomised. That paradox is reinforced by the film's framing; vast vistas stretch into the distance, yet Gao's avatar remains fixed in the foreground, unable to escape a world organised entirely around his own movement.

In trying to understand Gao, Shi is also forced into confrontation with himself. Where Gao appears charismatic, emotionally open and capable of action, Shi increasingly recognises his own passivity and inertia. The detective narrative thus begins to fold inward: the search for another person becomes a means of self-investigation. Shi's virtual embodiment of Gao feels at once invasive and claustrophobic, but also like an extreme act of empathy, as these virtual spaces can offer an unexpected intimacy, both a reflection of their estrangement and the means through which that estrangement might briefly be overcome.

In the end, is reality nothing but a glitch?

As *Zoom In, Zoom Out* shows, the voracious acceleration of the digital world, AI and technology is making us question our entire fabric of reality. If AI agents can now become sentient, what's to say for our own perception of our supposedly singular human consciousness? What, exactly, makes our own perception of reality more authentic than a reality that has been simulated?

The French filmmaker Quentin Dupieux, long the puppeteer of absurd and self-contained universes, pushes this question to its extreme in his animated feature *Vertiginous*. One morning, Jacques (Alain Chabat) arrives at the home of his best friend Bruno (Jonathan Cohen) with an epiphany: he believes they are living inside a simulation. How else might they explain the glitches that have begun appearing in the fabric of everyday life? A pigeon hovers inexplicably in the same spot under a manhole; a baby is born without an umbilical cord; familiar laws of cause and effect begin to turn upside down.

Dupieux made the film with five recent graduates of GOBELINS Paris, a visual communication school, using the free animation software Blender, modelling its sets in 3D and filming them through virtual cameras. The characters' faces resemble stretched photographs, generated through a deliberately handmade form of motion capture using an iPhone; their expressions often seem to lag fractionally behind their dialogue, producing an uncanny disjunction between voice and image. As the characters agonise over whether everything they have known might be unreal, the audience is placed in a position of dramatic irony: *of course, their world is artificial!* Their existential crisis therefore becomes inseparable from the film's own digital materiality.

Beyond its visual appeal, the film satirises the decay of interpersonal relationships. Again, death becomes the narrative's turning point. When Bruno and Jacques encounter an older philosopher, Christophe Bourgeois, in a cafe, he reveals his extensive research into these glitch phenomena, only to die moments later after being struck by a bus (perhaps a reference to Barthes' infamous death-by-laundry-van). From there, Bruno abandons Jacques and chooses instead to monetise their discovery, reproducing the logic of our very real capital-driven world they are supposedly removed from. Even such an existential discovery cannot rupture the ossified economic logic through which these characters have come to fleece one another.

The joke, or the tragedy, is bleakly contemporary. Maybe, in this age of technological restlessness and shape-shifting reality, it's also the only thing that seems real.


Vertiginous

Adults suck, don't they?

Tracey Toh

Bad parenting and spectacularly shitty behaviour of grown-ups leave kids dangling over a future that may never arrive

Childhood is rigged from the start – we former children know that firsthand. Parents and institutions set the terms, while children absorb the fallout from conflicts and dysfunctions they never signed up for. At this year's festival, films that draw on a director's memories of their early years, or the lived realities of adolescents, let us inhabit a young person's perspective, with an adult's awareness of the forces bearing down on them.

Ang Geck Geck's *Ah Girl* centres the eponymous protagonist who, at seven, is old enough to know what is happening around her, but too young to understand why. Inspired by the director's personal memories, this debut feature is mostly shot at Ah Girl's eye level or from her point of view, with adults looming over her and their faces sometimes exceeding the frame. Our visual field is scaled down to a 4:3 aspect ratio, a cramped box that reflects her position, caught in the crossfire between her recently separated parents who, distracted by their latest affairs, leave her and younger sister, Ah Tian, in the care of their grandmother.

Seen through the eyes of a child, grown-up behaviour appears capricious and arbitrary. Ah Girl treads carefully around her parents, tracking their every micro-expression. Close-ups follow her gaze as money changes hands, as she clocks the bruises on her mother's arm or her grandmother's wig slipping out of place. Though her awareness of their financial struggles and health problems deepens, she is powerless to change these circumstances. Instead, adults routinely impose their will on her, forcing her to cut her hair short and even separating her from Ah Tian. In a desperate bid for attention, she lets her foot slip between the slats of a garden swing, fracturing her ankle – her psychic wound finally manifests as a physical injury. Yet the incident only confirms an irony she is starting to recognise – that Mum and Dad are themselves poster children for lousy parenting, too petty and immature to set aside their differences, even in crisis.

This difficult chapter closes on a note of renewal. Her cast comes off, the family's pet bird escapes its cage, and our young heroine takes to the road to find Auntie Japan, one of her father's girlfriends, and the only adult who respects her opinions. She wears a sparkly purple dress that echoes the lilac shades favoured by Auntie Japan, fashioning herself after someone she admires. The metaphorical excess points, unmistakably, to the possibility of freedom and found family beyond the home. Setting the film in 1990s Singapore, while true to the director's coming-of-age, also locates Ah Girl's formative experiences firmly











in the past. The period-specific touches, like tear-off almanacs, vinyl tablecloths and lace doilies, are rendered with fidelity and to such nostalgic effect that her childhood pain is held at a safe, temporal remove.



Ah Girl

"While a child can afford to see herself only as a victim, no adult here is innocent. Each hurts the others, and is hurt, in turn."

While the tenderly scripted *Ah Girl* ends in hope, with the prospect that trauma can be put behind us, Makoto Nagahisa's *Burn* plunges us into the private hell of adolescence, thrusting a child into a predatory world she is ill-equipped to navigate. Based on extensive interviews with Tokyo's marginalised "Tōyoko kids", this harrowing drama follows Juju, a teenager who suffers years of abuse before running away and joining other homeless kids, fellow victims coerced into performing sex work or peddling drugs to survive. Inducted into prostitution by her new best friend, Juju tries to earn her way to liberation and rescue her younger sister.

The narrative is brutally honest about the sordid reality of these youths; but it is saved from unrelenting bleakness by a vibrant score and glimpses of the camaraderie between them. The most explicit scenes of physical and sexual violence are elided, but their long-term psychological effects are evoked through grim flashbacks that take us inside Juju's head, where the camera pans across rooms that distort and decompose as Juju's innocence is steadily corrupted.

At other moments, the children are shot from above and pictured as diminutive figures, emphasising their vulnerability. This time, we are the ones towering over them, adopting the vantage point of God, or the government, as we look upon those who have fallen through the cracks. *Burn* reads readily as an indictment of institutional failures and state neglect. The only adults Juju encounters – the police, her pimp, and the steady stream of men she services – are indifferent to her plight, if not actively exploiting her naivete. But by dwelling on the spectacularly shitty behaviour of grown-ups, alongside the absence of a single sympathetic adult, the film also traps Juju in a cruel world. Her only choice is between submitting to abuse at home or risking rape on the streets. Self-annihilation seems to be the only way out.



Burn

Where *Ah Girl* shows a child leaving home and *Burn* strands a teenage runaway in systems of abuse, Nông Nhật Quang's *Baby Jackfruit Baby Guava* turns to an adult who thought he'd gotten away clean but finds himself called back to his family of origin. Quang has carved out a life for himself in Hanoi, surrounded by queer community, but returns home to support his elder sister Mai through a difficult pregnancy. His intimate documentary is punctuated by shots from the windows of buses and trains, the passing scenery marking the distance he must cross, and the self he must shed in the process.

A scrapbook-style montage, with photo cut-outs and scribbled annotations, charts the siblings' fraught history: their initial closeness, their estrangement as Mai grew unstable, and their reconciliation after her schizophrenia diagnosis. The handmade artifice signals that this is only Quang's version of events. His mother Cuc constructs her own, deleting photos where Mai's smile looks strained to curate a highlights reel from their family archive.

In Quang's telling, adults are cast as eternal children: Quang, Mai and Cuc are presented as the Flamboyant Baby, Defiant Baby and Devastated Baby, respectively. No matter their actual age, each reverts to a child whenever a fight breaks out. During a tense dinner conversation, the harsh words of his mother can be heard off-screen, as the camera zooms in on the ants crawling across the table. Our field of vision shrinks once more to the minuscule, as a parent's tirade escalates, crowding out every other thought and sensation.

But while a child can afford to see herself only as a victim, no adult here is innocent. Each hurts the others, and is hurt, in turn. Cuc gave up a promotion to nurse Mai and expects a lot from her daughter. Quang once pushed Mai away, and now hesitates to introduce his boyfriend, afraid of drawing focus from her pregnancy. Mai's schizophrenia causes mood swings and hallucinations, but it is unclear whether her irritability is a symptom of her condition, or a feature of her personality. Care and blame, love and resentment ripple through the household, in a cycle of calm and chaos that none of them can really quit.

Growing up, Quang had believed that descending a mountain meant entering the future. He leaves us with two scenes on a mountaintop: his parents hiking with Mai, her husband and their baby; and separately, Quang and his boyfriend watching the sunset from a cliff. These scenes are spliced together, though the queer couple never shares the same frame as the rest. They haven't been brought into the fold of the family, but haven't descended the mountain either, so the acceptance Quang longs for might still be waiting for him.

All three films end mid-journey, with further pain and healing to come. Ah Girl is on the road; Juju is gravely injured but alive; even as an adult, Quang is negotiating his place within his family. In each case, the damage sustained in childhood has not resolved. The child, or the inner child, keeps moving forwards, towards a future that has not arrived – not yet.



Too Near, Too Far: The Gap in Archival Imagery

Antoine Thirion

Several films across this year's programme explore the temporal distance between the past and the present through the use of archival material, in the process revealing the complex relationship between history, images, and time



Amazomania

While contemporary art underwent an "archival turn" decades ago, cinema is actively engaging with history by bringing the images of the present, whether documentary or fictional, into dialogue with those of the past. And for good reason: the status of the archive in cinema is necessarily ambiguous. As a reproducible and fleeting medium, cinema maintains an ontological relationship with traces and memory.

But an image does not become an archive simply because of its age. The archive presupposes a history of preservation, transmission and reinterpretation. It is pre-existing material from which film extracts its contents from their original context and places them within a new system of images, sounds, and narratives. It is this gap, whether temporal, material, contextual or emotional, that allows the viewer to perceive an image as already seen and to experience its remanence.

This gap has taken many forms, beginning with the overarching commentary in the "compilation films" and the editing techniques of the "found footage." But it also explains why the genre of the cinematic essay has become such a fertile form: the filmmaker, who need not claim to occupy the position of the historian, can play with the archive precisely to the point of uncertainty regarding its meaning or provenance. The challenge, then, is to engage with the gap between old and new images and to see how the way it is maintained, shifted, obscured or eliminated activates the archive and transforms the manner in which a story is told. Several films in this year's programme make archives an integral part of their language.

In *On Memories of Countless Days*, as in *Compact Disc*, the archive is material shared between two friends who discover or rediscover


On Memories of Countless Days Away

it together. The former opens with a long take of a road, beneath a row of high-rises, across which a funeral procession moves horizontally. Providing commentary, Liao Jiekai and Elysa Wendi each recognise elements of their past in the scene. Throughout the film, home movies and unfinished projects constitute a space of memory shared by the two artists whose lives have been marked by displacement and wandering. As Liao films Wendi trying to recreate her past performance, his own childhood memories of Singapore resurface through his early films. These fragments do not constitute an orderly







Compact Disc

documentation of the past but rather a fragmented body of material in which memory and loss are inseparable. The archive does not necessarily restore what once was but makes perceptible what can no longer be recovered.

In *Compact Disc*, two young friends also discover an archive they had never seen before: police footage of their arrest during a pro-democracy demonstration in Hong Kong. Here, the archive no longer evokes a past that memory struggles to reconstruct, but a traumatic event that remains painfully present. Its transience seems to echo the instability of memory: when choppy, it seems to plead for the right to silence; when too clear and defined, it rekindles the pain. This impersonal archive is countered by other, more intimate traces: the greenish images of their nocturnal wanderings, when they freely expressed their opinions by tagging the sewers with playfully coded and eloquent inscriptions, and above all, the scars left on one of the boy's arms by shards of glass as the police dragged him across the ground. The body thus becomes a living archive, whose meaning cannot be fully absorbed by the political narrative: these scars belong first and foremost to the person who bears them, to his history, and to his personal identity. The film thus becomes an oppositional archive, setting personal and affectionate images against the police's documentation.



Rehearsals for a Revolution

In *Rehearsals for a Revolution*, filmmaker and actress Pegah Ahangarani draws on a variety of archival materials (home movies, newspaper clippings, protest footage, and audio recordings) to trace forty years of Iranian history, from the Iran-Iraq War to the most recent uprisings and the 2026 attacks carried out by Israel and the United States. But this history, structured into five chapters centred on figures from her inner circle, is constantly brought back to individuals: her father, a socially conscious filmmaker who later served as a soldier during the war and whose revolutionary illusions were shattered by repression; her literature teacher, a symbol of freedom and knowledge who was fired from her job; her uncle, a journalism student who was tortured and murdered; her friend Amir, who was involved in the 2009 Green Movement before leaving Iran for good; and finally, her young daughter, who shifts the final chapter towards the future.

These five individuals serve as entry points into Iranian history, but the editing does not simply transform personal archives into a historical narrative: it organises national history according to a constellation of intimate relationships. At times it is personal memory; at other times the archive itself tells the story. This process reactivates the archive to replace despondency with a horizon of expectation, reopening the apparent failure of each wave of resistance as a repetition in preparation for a future revolution.

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Two short films, *Fruits of Despair* and *In Sum*, arise from a confused perception of the gap between the present and the archive. And yet this confusion is diametrically opposed: one concerns excessive distance, the other radical proximity.

Nima Nassaj's *Fruits of Despair* begins with a form of falsification serving the

truth: images of destruction in Palestine between 1948 and 1968 are paired with a voiceover that doesn't belong to the original soundtrack but to other images from 2024. Two eras of Palestine are thus linked by a shared history of occupation and ethnic cleansing, and the image of the past becomes an image of the present. But this gesture is not enough: like each of us, the filmmaker observes that while numbers depersonalise, the absence of a single individual can capture the world's attention. To rehumanise the archive, he then tells the story of one of the founders of the Palestine Liberation Movement's film unit, Hani Jawharieh, by showing footage of his children taken shortly before his assassination in Lebanon at the age of 37. But the Israeli-American recent bombings interrupt Nassaj's editing work and force him to evacuate Tehran. The collective narrative thus gradually shifts into a personal one until the filmmaker himself becomes part of the story he was setting out to tell. As he sought to give due weight to the loss of human life, his experience of powerlessness and invisibility now binds him intimately to the fate of the victims.

Where Nassaj brings the archive closer to the present, Komtouch Napattaloong makes the present indistinguishable from the archive. All the images from *In Sum* seem old, damaged and flawed: this is true of the American archives from the CIA and Shell, which evoke the myth of a Thailand that was never colonised but still actively participated in anti-communist ideology, as well as those of *Tongpan*, a recently restored major work by the Isan Film Group that follows a poor farmer from northeastern Thailand grappling with development projects in the region, using the debate surrounding his village to reveal the power dynamics between the state,



In Sum

modernisation and rural populations. These archives intermingle with rural landscapes filmed today by the filmmaker using a faulty camera. The gap between the archive and the present thus narrows until it becomes almost imperceptible, as several eras are immersed in the same electronic and spectral material. The elimination of this historical gap highlights the persistence of an ideology whose promises of development appear as an outdated fiction.

In *Amazomania*, the gap between the archives and the present seems, at first glance, unambiguous. Structuring his film in two parts, Nathan Grossman juxtaposes footage of a Swedish explorer who set out to meet an uncontacted tribe in the Amazon with his return, decades later, to the same community now equipped with cell phones and solar panels. The film's considerable impact stems from the fact that a question is, unexpectedly, reflected back to the creator of the original footage. What he had regarded for decades as an intimate encounter – upon which, moreover, he had built his entire career – was in reality profoundly asymmetrical and exploitative. The images seemed to establish


Amazomania

an unprecedented closeness with an indigenous people; yet this intimacy consisted of a negation of the other side of the relationship. The second film must therefore confront the intimacy inherited from a gaze that is not his own. It does not simply correct the archive but introduces a different relationship to these images and seeks to return them to those it represents. While the Swedish explorer, clearly unsettled, refuses to abandon his defensive stance, Grossman involves the community in the film's production, contractually guaranteeing them the right to review the film and a share of the profits.

What defines the archive, then, is not its temporal distance but the relationship the film establishes with it. These films do not merely preserve the past or give it new meaning; they explore the distance that separates the image from what it depicts and the present from what it seeks to understand about the past. Whether it is explored in *On Memories of Countless Days*, transformed into closeness in *Compact Disc* and *Rehearsals for a Revolution*, or, conversely, obscured in *In Sum* and revealed as a power dynamic in *Amazomania*, this distance becomes the film's true substance. The intimacy of the archive therefore does not stem from its supposed transparency: on the contrary, it arises from what it allows us to glimpse while maintaining an irreducible element of absence, loss or opacity. It is in this gap, rather than in the promise of access to the past, that these images find their full relevance.

Amir Muhammad

You Love, You Labour, You Lose

The scourge of capitalism is old news that however remains deeply, stubbornly and even gorily relevant in these films



Shame and Money

Let's talk about some films in this year's programme that can be grouped loosely under "The Soul of Man Under Capitalism".

One of the things I learned when first getting onto this locomotive called the internet (before some of you were born!) was that Malaysian hair is valuable: something about the texture or durability, caused by a lifetime of consuming durian, palm oil and lately the haze. There were websites where you could sell your hair to be used as wigs for export to follically challenged communities. It was a strikingly literal demonstration of how capitalism makes you sell parts of yourself to get by – remember the American indie-movie lore of Robert Rodriguez selling his blood to raise money for his debut?

The new film by Edwin (who is so famous he needs only one name) takes place in a factory where such large-scale hair harvesting takes place. This ghoulish establishment, supposedly somewhere in Indonesia, demands even other parts of your body (that can now regrow like hair, so that production can be maximised!) as commodities. Not only that, the inducements for the workers to always seek overtime means that they *Sleep No More*. The central visual metaphor of "selling parts of yourself" carries the film to its suitably gory finale, and I'll remember what labour exploitation does to people for longer than I'll remember the actual monster itself.

The main image I will take away from *Filipiñana*, by Rafael Manuel, is of a teenager framed as seated between the spread legs of a standing man who is about to swing his club. Her occupation: tee girl in an exclusive golf resort. (We get the sense that no matter the age of the female who does this job, you are encouraged to see them as "girls", the same way secretaries used to be called "girl Friday".)

The film's palette is pastel and unruffled, all the better to underscore the simmering class resentments that never quite boil over. One death takes place off-screen, and is handled by the club's denizens like any inconvenience that can be solved by money. Another example in the movie: personal caddies are provided so you don't have to lug your bag around. I am reminded of the real-world (or as much of this that can be gleaned from a viral internet clip) example of that Anthony Bourdain interview with middle-class Singaporeans who never did their own laundry.

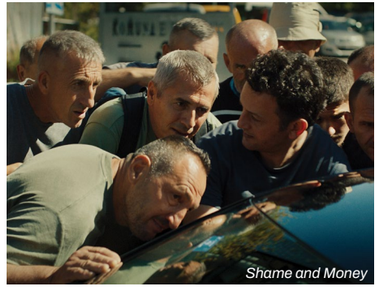

Filipiñana

In earlier Filipino films such as Lino Brocka's *Manila in the Claws of Light* (1975), class exploitation is presented viscerally through prostitution and the violence of hired thugs. But in *Filipiñana*, this critique is gift-wrapped in a gilded package that has maybe a discreet blood stain in one corner.

(Digression: Would the Singaporeans who spoke to Bourdain about their maids be among those who bought tickets to this film because it arrived with the requisite First World festival laurels? If so, what will they think of it?)

A European milieu that is decidedly not First World is *Shame and Money*. Visar Morina's film gives us the drab Kosovar surroundings, the opposite of the serene opulence of *Filipiñana*. I expected the film to climax in an outburst of violence like *Parasite* (2019) or Fassbinder's *Why Does Herr R Run Amok?* (1970). But the banal, relentless but realistic villain here is the steady grind of underemployment faced by the protagonist.

The most indelible moments are when men gather by the side of the road to offer menial work to passing car occupants. This reminded me of the time I was stationed in Jakarta over two


Shame and Money

decades ago. A law then restricted cars with fewer than three occupants from entering the city during morning and evening rush hours. An ingenious solution was found that simultaneously provided small amounts of cash for thousands of men needing work: They would gather outside the city centre by the road to be hired as the third occupant, or even the second and third occupants. Then they would be dropped off when inside the city. These men were called *joki* (jockey), which I suppose rhymes with caddy. (A decade ago, Jakarta abolished this system in favour of odd-even licence plates on alternate weekdays. To which sectors of the gig economy did the *joki* then go?)

To the hero of *Shame and Money*, there is no shame in honest work. His dignity stands in contrast to that of his brother-in-law, who is very the *kiasu* one. This movie also contains a jump-scare of a former US president that is scarier than anything in *Sleep No More*.

As someone who moves from the countryside to the city while finding himself economically disenfranchised, where would his political allegiance lie? When he votes, would it be for working-class solidarity or a more reactionary force that blames outsiders such as migrants for all the nation's woes?

A consideration of such a scenario is outlined in a whiteboard lecture, of all things, halfway through another standout film in this year's selection, Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *All of a Sudden*. It posits that liberal democracies thrive in cities that already benefit from late capitalism, while those who have been exploited by being outside the centre may certainly have other ideas.

This Japanese–French coproduction is several things at once – a film about ageing, caregiving, the role of art in life, and a sapiosexual Sapphic love story. It also asks: does a person's life become irrelevant once they are no longer a part of the workforce? The care method shown in the film treats each old person as an individual, but an irony is that, in the present circumstances, such a treatment is available only to those who have amassed enough wealth. To quote a line from one of Singapore cinema's greatest films *Madu 3* (P. Ramlee, 1964): "*Hidup pun susah*, *mati pun susah*." (Living is hard, dying also hard *leh*.)

The Thai film *The Burning Giants*, by Phuttiphong Aroonpheng, reminds me of the oeuvre of the Malaysian auteur Chong Keat Aun, because it fuses gorgeous imagery with political commentary that is refracted through atavistic mythology. (Both directors stage scenes that cite localised adaptations of the *Ramayana*.)

This modern fable of military action against the Karen minority has moments of grim terror, moments of naturalistic beauty, and moments of *liak bo kiu*.

Like in *Sleep No More*, dehumanisation makes itself visible as actual scars on the body – this time, not as limbs that can grow back but through burns from a mysterious virus which the government tries to contain, in ways that can trigger flashbacks to how we experienced much of 2020–2022.

There is a death in an open place that may not even be a statistic; it may go unreported. This is because people who stand in the way of the juggernaut will somehow be silenced. This juggernaut can be termed capitalism or the military industrial complex or even, things being the way they are, the algorithm.

The most beautiful closing shot in these films (but I won't reveal which one) is a moment of subtle devastation: a gate is closed, meaning that the main character now earns a living by ensuring that people of a similar class will be kept away from things they cannot afford, and people they cannot afford to reproach. **You love, you labour and, inevitably, you lose.**



Sleep No More



The Burning Giants

Mutata Figura

Alyssandra Maxine



Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma

Body joy, body **horror**, queer becomings, and the modern disconnect between flesh and soul

This essay's title has been taken from Erich Auerbach's mention of the phrase *mutata figura*, used in a Latin poem to describe how "death's power [changes] the forms of man." But how else do our bodies, immortal or otherwise, change against our will, warped by external malevolence or unexplained circumstances? Where in our own bodies do these films meet us, and where do we want their narratives to spirit us away to?

In Maria Martinez Bayona's debut dystopian feature *The End of It*, immortal Claire (Rebecca Hall) invites one and all to her death day after 250 years of living. Her dreams involve her hands wrinkling like a hag, her hair falling out in one fell swoop, and blood dripping prick by prick from her veins, rendered in slow motion and misty red-orange lights. Then the state gets the last word, embalming Claire's horrified face into an exhibit for public viewing as both a warning and a mockery of her choice with her own body.

Pink skies and powdered alps foreground Camp Tivoli's frost-encrusted signage in *Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma*. Kris (Hannah Einbinder), an up-and-coming bespectacled director, believes she's alone in the middle of a boreal nowhere. But she flinches when heels click towards her from behind: The final girl onscreen—now a smirking woman forty years older and flanked by the whirring projector—emerges from the darkness.

"I hope you like fried chicken," drawls Billy (Gillian Anderson), clasping a tray chock-full of poultry. Kris's mission is to convince Billy to join her reboot of the slasher franchise called Camp Miasma, although Hollywood executives would rather reduce Billy's role to a cameo.

"Let's do it," she murmurs into Kris' ear. "Let's make a movie." Their resulting collaboration creates an irreverent snow globe that scatters glitter as its world shudders—whether from Kris' spasms, or through the shaky breaths of the franchise's serial killer, Little Death (Jack Haven), as he slashes and dismembers his way into the annihilation of every teenager on campus, against a downbeat indie rock ballad and an equally wanton 35mm camera.

Billy's actualisation and purpose within *Teenage Sex* feels like a natural buildup to the inclinations of director Jane Schoenbrun's towards narratives that "crack the egg," a term used by trans individuals to reckon with their identities. Although their previous *I Saw the TV Glow* (2024) has explicitly been referenced by the director as a film centred around that subject, their first narrative feature, *We're All Going to the World's Fair* (2021), is how they first came out to the public as a trans artist.

By contrast, *Teenage Sex* is the albumen-soaked chick wobbling from a shattered shell, transcending embryonic preconceptions and internalized theories by gleefully ramming its beak like a woodchuck maniac—empowered by the muse, the catalyst for change, who has fled the four corners of Schoenbrun's previous screens. To bypass these queer aspects of *Teenage Sex* is to deny the impact of its denouement, where blissful Kris and Billy, both "covered with blood, broken but transfigured and in agreement with the world," to quote Batailles, wander around a convenience store in broad daylight to satiate



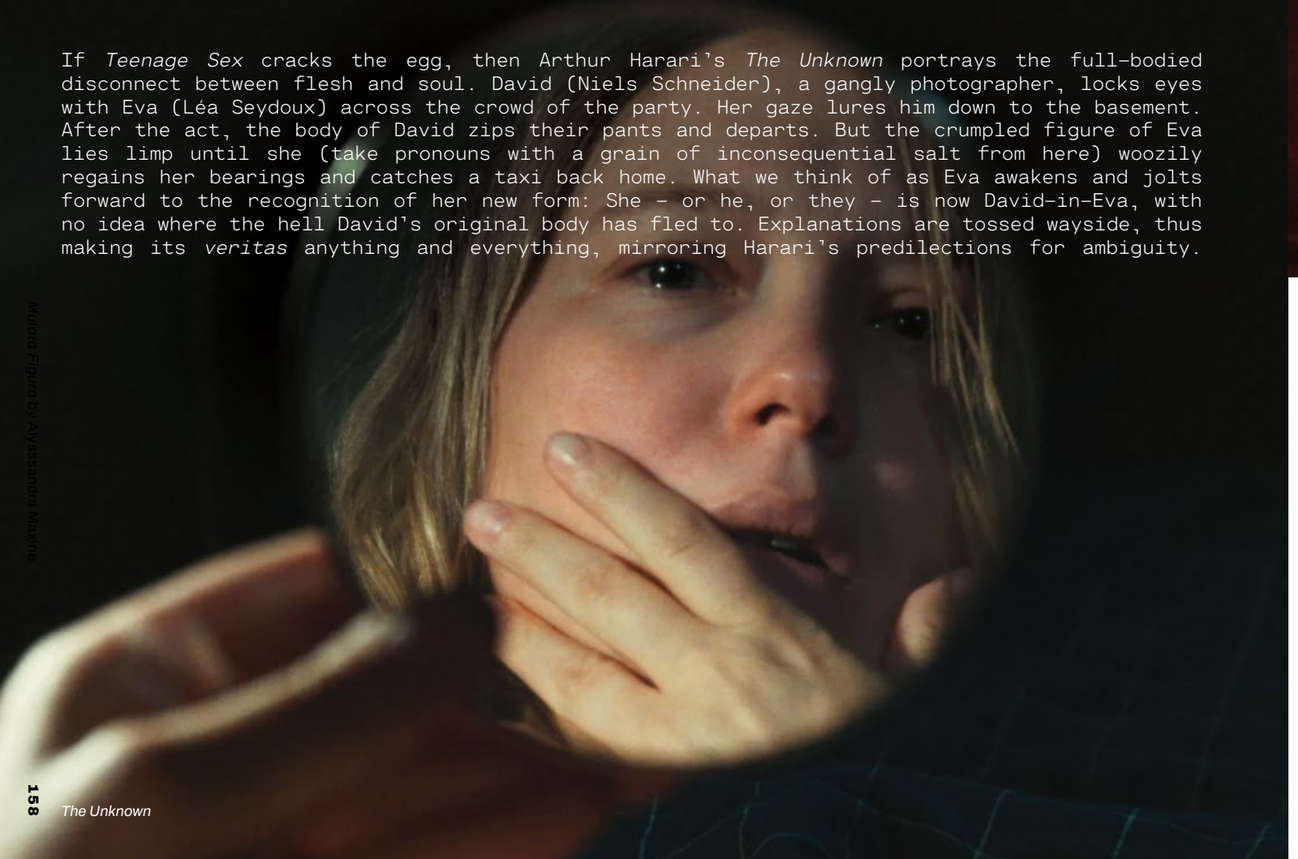
Teenage Sex and Death at Camp Miasma

post-sex cravings, much to the envy of its staff. And when they walk out the door with their sodium-infused loot, Kris salivates at the thought of another close encounter with the third, radical kind.



I Saw the TV Glow

If *Teenage Sex* cracks the egg, then Arthur Harari's *The Unknown* portrays the full-bodied disconnect between flesh and soul. David (Niels Schneider), a gangly photographer, locks eyes with Eva (Léa Seydoux) across the crowd of the party. Her gaze lures him down to the basement. After the act, the body of David zips their pants and departs. But the crumpled figure of Eva lies limp until she (take pronouns with a grain of inconsequential salt from here) woozily regains her bearings and catches a taxi back home. What we think of as Eva awakens and jolts forward to the recognition of her new form: She – or he, or they – is now David-in-Eva, with no idea where the hell David's original body has fled to. Explanations are tossed wayside, thus making its *veritas* anything and everything, mirroring Harari's predilections for ambiguity.



The Unknown





The Unknown

David, in Eva's body, eventually finds his old form soaked in rain and inhabited by a former inhibited teenage girl, Malia (Lilith Grasmug). However, Malia never relaxes, discomforted by her new gender. Her head bobs in hesitation; her whispers are a pitch higher than David's old voice. In contrast, David leads most of their investigation and moves without tension–a strong juxtaposition to his awkwardness in his original body.

But the real horror hits when discovers that he is pregnant in Eva's body. As they walk out of the clinic, Malia's face softens for the first time as she expresses tentative optimism of starting a family together. "When I look at you," she muses, "I feel something deep. Like I'm not trapped anymore."

Whereas Malia prefers the certainty of domestic structures, David has always operated in ambiguity. He never commits to his former partner, reluctantly describes his work to strangers, and keeps mum about their plight for the most part. Like the photography series conceptualized by his father and continued by him that records the same neighbourhoods in different centuries, he allows developments in his new identity to accrue over time rather than assuming an immediate definition.

And maternity itself is an irreversible change–more so when the plan is proposed from the lips which used to be his, from a face that bore a serene expression that he never felt inside. Dysphoria can be portrayed onscreen as mundanely as a woman in bed staring numbly at images of herself laughing at a rooftop with friends: imagining her hair swaying, bending against the sunlight.



Rose



Elephants in the Fog

If these two films focus on the queer "becomings," on the other end of the spectrum of "being," *Rose* and *Elephants in the Fog* ask how identities and bodies deemed aberrant survive in communities hostile to their mere existence. In one, a German woman (Sandra Huller) assumes the identity of a dead man and irrigates idle land into a self-sustaining farmstead. In the other, Pirati (Pushpa Thing Lama), a trans Kinnar woman, searches for a younger sister who disappeared under her watch within a Nepalese village too steeped in corruption and patriarchy to enact justice.

In *Rose*, identities perish. Rose's denouement is striking when considering the austere portrayal, by director Markus Schleinzer, of her simple life prior to her outing. Men in ruffled collars and filled to the brim with absurd prepositions examine what's inside her pants in front of the whole courthouse and deliver the verdict, which she meets with a stoic gaze and placid remarks. If no one around her can empathise with the circumstances that led to an orphan to never take off a pair of trousers and lie for the rest of her life, then she can write a testimony and hope that it eclipses her corporeal form, entering more emphatic ears in the future.

Conversely, time is too short for Pirati in *Elephants in the Fog* to do any accounting, not when there's a life on the line. Despite weeks of searching, neither the police nor her sisters can find Apsara, the missing woman. Her absence weighs on Pirati's consciousness, acutely aware of how her unexplained desire to center herself alienated Apsara. Has she fled into the city? Or has she been chased into the sacred forest, its entryway barred by watchmen to "protect" its elephants and rituals? Unsatisfied with ambiguity, weeks later, Pirati takes matters into her own hands. With her sisters, she clamours into spaces they should not be in despite the mob on their tail. That feral, righteous hoard is determined to burn everything of the sisters to the ground, right as they discover the truth. But they forget that when there is no body to keep the score, another shall take this place- and those sisters will keep clapping and walking like thunder reincarnated until something larger than themselves bursts forth from the night.

Inside and outside the cinema of care

Wikanda Promkhuntong


All of a Sudden

On ageing, caring, merit-making and tending to the elderly through films that ponder the old age of cinema itself

The four films discussed in this essay are an opportune extension of my own research project on women's screen work and care in Asian cinema, which I've been developing alongside colleagues from several countries. This trajectory began in the early years of the Covid-19 pandemic, when concerns about screen labour, media work, and its precarity grew. Care is an expansive concept that extends into discussions of gendered treatment, class systems, capitalism, social hierarchies, labour welfare, and ageing. These four films, to be screened across various sections at the 37th SGIFF remind me that cinema, as an art form and entity, is also ageing. The inside and the outside – my own research and the films, the ageing of characters and of the medium – cannot be totally separated. Cinema doesn't need to stay young, but as we can see here, many practitioners of the art still work hard to put a spring in its step, along with the characters they portray.


Tangles

Leah Nelson's *Tangles* tells the story of a queer woman from a small town in North America who has to come to terms with her mother's decline due to Alzheimer's, and who decides to move back to her conservative hometown just as her career is about to take off. The animated feature is based on Sarah Leavitt's autobiographical graphic novel, and Leavitt co-wrote the film with Trev Renney. In *9 Temples to Heaven* by Sompot Chidgasornpongse, we see the eldest son of an extended family trying to rally everyone in his clan to go on an epic merit-making trip to nine temples, hoping that the good karma will extend the life of his mother. Radu Jude's *Diary of a Chambermaid* explores the subjects of care, migration, and gender through the life of a Romanian live-in carer working for a well-to-do family in France, leaving behind her young daughter and ageing mother in Eastern Europe. Lastly, Ryusuke Hamaguchi's *All of a Sudden* is set mostly in a care home in the Paris suburbs, where its female director is trying to introduce a new care praxis and manages to do so after a chance encounter with a Japanese experimental theatre director whose work explores the divide between art and life.

Caring entails physical and emotional labour, and in these four films, care work falls largely on women: the daughters in *Tangles* and *9 Temples to Heaven*, the single mom/maid in *Diary of a Chambermaid*, and the community of

nurses and care workers in *All of a Sudden*. Apart from gender, care comes with the intersection of age, income, and family hierarchy. *9 Temples* portrays this so well through the microcosm of a family where the (presumably unmarried and unemployed) daughter shoulders the heaviest load of physically caring for her ailing mother, while the youngest son merely offers his house as a care space (apparently with CCTV) and his teenage daughter is around to support the aunt when not in school. It is not that other family members are not concerned about the martriarch, but the film makes clear that care work often goes to women and an economic minority within a household. *Diary of a Chambermaid* entangles another layer of social class and geopolitics into the mix, as care comes from a female migrant domestic worker from a less developed fringe of the EU working for an allegedly progressive, affluent French family – the typical bourgeoisie who have no time to cook or to care for their young son and injured *grand-mère*. The empty bubble of champagne socialism is pretty obvious here.

While portraying different modes of care, these films seem to show us that care work is negotiated and relational. This is very much in line with feminist ethics of care, which rejects seemingly universal impartial ethics and liberal individualised morality. Ritual, approach, direction, instinct: they are never fixed, but are something all parties in the system must agree upon. Or at least until the breaking point arrives and the tables turn; sooner or later, the carers also need care. In Tangles and 9 Temples to Heaven, we realise that while holidays, weddings, and road trips do bring people together and momentarily cloud all frustrations and discomforts, each member still has to deal with their own fractured realities when the collective moment ends.

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Diary of a Chambermaid

Beyond the family logic, there is the capitalist logic. The paid care systems in *All of a Sudden* and *Diary of a Chambermaid* further draw attention to the way empathy operates under the rigidity of extractive efficiency methods. These films reflect the nature of care as a routine (or bureaucratic, in *All of a Sudden*) practice, visualising the passing of days and months with dates in a diary format and daily video calls to family overseas, while also blurring the lines between life, work and pleasure.

As we're talking about cinema attuned to the elderly, a meta question arises: is the medium itself also a senior entity in need of care? No longer in need of proving its own specificity and its status as an art form, cinema has found a rejuvenating springboard when it integrates other art forms into its text. Nelson, Sompot, Jude and Hamaguchi show us that cinema is inclusive enough to accommodate intermedial experimentation; here, the filmmakers allow theatre, pantomime, literature and folk arts to comfortably exist within the cinematic flesh, bringing vitality and life to the host.

Tangles uses animation to powerfully visualise the unarticulated thoughts of a cartoonist/carer and an Alzheimer's patient/mother. *9 Temples to Heaven* intimately observes vernacular Thai Buddhist landscapes and soundscapes through mural paintings, sculptures, religious chanting, and intergenerational pop songs that give each family member a space for contemplation. *Diary of a Chambermaid* offers us a juxtaposition of the Romanian folktale about lost time, recalled in French, to poignant still photographs of deserted countryside devoid of humans. The film also satirises Octave Mirbeau's novel, its source text, and stages a play that is eventually derailed by an actor's migrant legal status. *All of a Sudden*, while loosely based on a non-fiction book, makes the most of theatre practice (expanded further from Hamaguchi's mode of integration in *Drive My Car*) to question the insides and outsides of artistic and real-world spaces, language and translation. The intertextual and intermedial dialogues in these films also embrace ecological and material relations to nature, animals, a solar eclipse, or earth's simple light changing from night to day. Illnesses, disabilities, and life's interruptions also ask us to go beyond linear temporality and to question what is normal, as well as what lies inside and outside of cinema. What lies beyond the safe zone of the screen and its contrivances, since care extends beyond the screen? Writing this essay, I felt laden with these entanglements. *Tangles* and *9 Temples to Heaven* are particularly resonant with my family circumstances: The former was the first of the four films I watched after a long week of flying back to my hometown to care for my father after his surgery. After I left, my aunts continued to look after my parents. These are the same aunts who have to take turns taking care of my grandmother and dealing with occasional family tensions not too far removed from the family in *9 Temples to Heaven*. *All of a Sudden* runs for over three hours. I did not expect to experience a power cut just after 30 minutes in. Yet its epic exploration inside and outside the institution of care still manages to move me to tears. With an intermedial and immersive mode of cinema, despite interruptions, these films gently invite audiences to think about and think with others, articulating the work of emotions conducive to care that may lead to some change, at least from the inside.



Image credit: Lee Si Min

About the Festival

Entering its 37th edition, the Singapore International Film Festival remains an illustrious cornerstone of the nation's annual cultural calendar.

With its long-standing focus on groundbreaking Asian and Southeast Asian cinema, the festival celebrates stories and artistry, bringing the magic of cinema to film communities in the region.

About the Festival

The Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) was established in 1987. With its focus on groundbreaking Asian cinema, SGIFF has become known for its dynamic programming and commitment to the development of a vibrant local and regional film culture. By nurturing up-and-coming filmmakers while deepening the public's appreciation of independent film, SGIFF aims to inspire through the transformational power of cinema.

1987 Showcasing the best of international cinema, the very first edition opens with The Name of the Rose by Jean-Jacques Annaud (France).

1991 Launch of the Silver Screen Awards to recognise the bets of Asian feature films and Singapore short films.

1992 The festical opens with an Asian film for the first time with Raise the Red Lantern by Zhang Yimou (China).

1997 Eric KHOO's *12 Storeys* wins the NETPAC-FIPRESCI Critics Prize at SGIFF, and later becomes the first Singapore-made film to be screened at Cannes.

2008 Launch of the Singapore Panorama section to celebrate local films.

2014 SGIFF commemorates its 25th anniversary with a new logo and opens with local film Unlucky Plaza by Ken Kwek. The inaugural Honorary Award is presented to Im Kwon-taek (South Korea). Launch of Southeast Asian Film Lab and Youth Jury & Critics Programme to nurture budding filmmakers and critics from the region.

2016 SGIFF commisions its first Singapore short film, The Pursuit of a Happy Human Life by Gladys Ng.

2017 Introduction of the Southeast Asian Producers Network. Ana Urushadze (Georgia) receives the inaugural inspiring Woman in Film Award presented by Swarovski.

2018 Launch of the SGIFF Film Fund to support Southeast Asian documentaries and short films. The inaugural Lesly Ho Asian Film Talent Award is presented to Yeo Siew Hua (Singapore). SGIFF holds its first edition of Moonlight Cinema, an outdoor screening event. Introduction of the Film Immersion Programme for youths.

2019 On the occasion of its 30th anniversary, SGIFF presents three commissioned short films by Southeast Asian filmmakers, Mouly Surya (Indonesia), Anucha Boonyawatana (Thailand) and Yeo Siew Hua (Singapore). Launch of SGIFF Film Academy, the region's first holistic film training initiative for Southeast Asian Talents.

2021 The inaugural Outstanding Contribution to Southeast Asian Cinema Award is presented to Southeast Asia Fiction Film Lab (SEAFIC).

2024 The Audience Choice Award is open only to films made in Singapore or with Singapore co-production. Launch of the inaugural edition of the SGIFF Industry Days conference.

2025 The Cinema Honorary Award is awarded to Deepa Mehta, the first non-male recipient.

2026 SGIFF Pro sees three new additions to its programme: Off Campus, Parallax and Pitching Forum.



Film Immersion Programme

In today's complex media landscape, our Film Immersion Programme is designed to equip students with the critical thinking skills needed to navigate and understand the images they encounter online and offline. Participants enjoy a selection of short film screenings, facilitated Q&As, and a chance to encounter the workings of a film festival through volunteering.

Find out more at sgiff.com/film-immersion-programme

Film Education Programmes

The Singapore International Film Festival has long been a passionate advocate for film literacy and appreciation among Singapore's youth. The Festival now proudly runs two key outreach programmes that are designed to develop in students a deeper understanding of the art of film and provide exposure to alternative film-watching experiences.

We use local and Southeast Asian films to connect students with their community, and broaden their worldviews by presenting myriad perspectives and stories. Beyond developing practical skills in critical analysis and communication, our programmes spark a love for cinema and foster a deeper understanding of both Singaporean and global film culture among young audiences.

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