Welcome!

For the inaugural edition of the Chinese-language Film Festival Ireland – Made in Taiwan – we are honoured to welcome Taiwanese master Hou Hsiao-Hsien and his longtime collaborator, screenwriter Chu Tien-Wen.

As an infant, Hou fled with his family to Taiwan from Guangdong Province to escape the Chinese Civil War in 1948. Since directing his debut feature Cai Grl in 1980, he has enjoyed a prolific career winning awards at Venice, Berlin, and Cannes where he was awarded Best Director for The Assassin (2015). Hou’s films offer an intimate and uncompromising radiograph of Taiwan’s history of change. Long shots and largely static camera positions make his films instantly recognisable. Melancholic and impressionistic, his work is poignantly immersive, filled with nuance and intuition.

The festival features a programme of four rare screenings spanning Hou’s career. Fuelled by memories from childhood A Time to Live, A Time to Die (1992), a haunting period of 20th century Taiwan history, Hou’s youth, with gangs on the streets of southern Taipei, the making of complex and stunning films such as Raise the Red Lantern while drawing attention to Taiwanese cinema. Hou, also an actor, producer and executive producer, has helped to realise classics such as Taipei Story, and Raise the Red Lantern while nurturing new talents.

Our guests of honour

Mr. Hou Hsiao-Hsien

Born in Guangdong, China in 1947, Hou’s family fled to Fengshan in Southern Taiwan in 1948 where he grew up. He graduated from the Taiwan National Academy of Arts, working as Assistant Director to Li Hsing and Xu Jin-liang before his directing debut in 1980. Since then Hou has created a succession of masterworks, winning numerous international awards while drawing attention to Taiwanese cinema. Hou, also an actor, producer and executive producer, has helped to realise classics such as Taipei Story, and Raise the Red Lantern while nurturing new talents.

Ms. Chu Tien-Wen

Chu was born in 1956 Taipei into one of Taiwan’s most prominent literary families. Her literary career began at a very young age in the mid-1970s. Her most highly acclaimed works are Fin-de-Siècle Splendour (1999) and Notes of a Desolate Man (1993). She is the recipient of the North American 2015 Newman Prize for Chinese Literature. As a screenwriter, she has been collaborating with Hou Hsiao-Hsien since 1982, on award-winning films such as A Time to Live, A Time to Die. Mr. Hou Hsiao-Hsien, a key figure in Taiwan’s New Wave Cinema of the ‘80s and widely recognised as one of the most important living filmmakers; and his long time collaborator, screenwriter and novelist Ms. Chu Tien-Wen. This is their first visit to Ireland and a rare opportunity for an Irish audience to have first hand insights into the creative process at play in the making of complex and stunning films such as A City of Sadness and The Assassin, for which Hou won the Best Director award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2015. Led by Chinese-language cinema academic Professor Chris Berry of King’s College London, the masterclass is supported by STI and the IFFI.

Masterclass

Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Chu Tien-Wen in conversation

We are delighted to announce a masterclass with Mr. Hou Hsiao-Hsien, a key figure in Taiwan’s New Wave Cinema of the ’80s and widely recognised as one of the most important living filmmakers; and his long time collaborator, screenwriter and novelist Ms. Chu Tien-Wen. This is their first visit to Ireland and a rare opportunity for an Irish audience to have first hand insights into the creative process at play in the making of complex and stunning films such as A City of Sadness and The Assassin.

Cinemas in East Asia. His latest publication is Chinese Film Festival: Sites of Translation (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

We welcome Mr. Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Ms. Chu Tien-Wen to the Chinese-language Film Festival Ireland 2017 to discuss their careers. This masterclass features an intimate conversation with Mr. Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Ms. Chu Tien-Wen at the Irish Film Institute.

Friday 12 May

6.00pm

A Time to Live, A Time to Die

腎年往事

followed by Q&A with Hou Hsiao-Hsien

9.15pm

Small Talk

日常對話

Introduced by Hou Hsiao-Hsien

Saturday 13 May

12.00 – 2.00pm

Masterclass with Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Chu Tien-Wen

2.30pm

The Boys from Fengkuei

風櫃來的人

Introduced by Hou Hsiao-Hsien

6.00pm

The Road to Mandalay

再見瓦城

Sunday 14 May

2.00pm

A Touch of Zen

爾女

 Introduced by Prof. Chris Berry

5.30pm

A City of Sadness

悲情城市

followed by Q&A with Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Chu Tien-Wen

Note:

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Festival Sponsorship & Development

Executive: Yvonne Kennedy

Festival Co-organiser & Academic Liaison

Manager: Maria O’Brien

Festival Artistic & Programme Director:

Marie-Pierre Richard
Taiwan New Cinema

Taiwan New Cinema was an international award-winning New Wave art film movement that transformed filmmaking in the island in the early 1980s. Works like Hou Hsiao-Hsien’s *The Boys From Fengkuei* (1983) resolutely focused on the poetry of everyday life on the island. Along with colleagues such as Edward Yang and Wang Tung, Hou pioneered a realistic fidelity to the mix of spoken languages that might be heard on the streets and the use of locations rather than studio sets, as well as a long shot and long take aesthetic.

Taiwan New Cinema also puts focus on local history. Films like Hou’s autobiographical *A Time to Live, A Time to Die* (1985) conveyed the growing realisation of the island’s isolation from the Communist mainland through the lives of an ordinary family. This focus on history culminated in Hou’s *A City of Sadness* (1989), an epic family saga that won him the Golden Lion in Venice. Made after forty years of martial law and right-wing repression had been replaced by multi-party democracy, the film explored the consequences of the 28 February 1947 incident whereby the Nationalists launched a major crackdown on students in Taiwan.

In the 1990s, a second wave of filmmakers such as Tsai Ming-Liang and Chang Tao-Tchu diversified Taiwan New Cinema. Hou himself tackled contemporary themes in films like *Goodbye South, Goodbye* (2015), which won him Best Director at Cannes.

**Animation short film programme**

A selection of six animation short films has been curated by Dr. Chi-Sui Wang, Curator, and presented in association with KDIAF and the Animation Department, Taiwan National University of the Arts. Six films will be screened before each of the feature programmes from Friday to Sunday.

**Saturday 13 May, 2.30pm**
**HOU HSIAO-HSIEH PROGRAMME**

The Boys From Fengkuei (Feng Gui Lai Hu) (1983)


Hou’s fourth feature and one of the breakthrough works of the Taiwanese New Wave, follows Ah-Ching and his brothers who have just finished school, on their journey west to search for work in the city of Kaohsiung where they face the harsh realities of the big city and of growing up. A young woman is torn between two possible futures – the madame of a small-time gangster activities. Youngest brother Wen-Ching is a deaf-mute leftist photographer. He escapes from his life in Kaohsiung to live in the country. Hou’s delicate gaze juxtaposes the larger society.

**Saturday 13 May, 6.00pm**
**Irish Premiere**

The Road To Mandalay (1932)

108 minutes. Taiwan/France/Germany/Myanmar. 2016. Subtitled. Colour. D-Cinema. (Federa Award for Best Film, Venice Film Festival 2016).

Please note: Contains some violent scenes.

A visual storytelling, above all contemplative, of the romance between two illegal Burmese mouths. In The Land Of Smiles things are easy and encuentre historia y arte, realizó un cuidadoso nuevo lenguaje para su films, where form and content are equals.

**Kite**

**Film:**

Kite

**Director:**

Hsin Lin

**Screening:**


The Boys From Fengkuei (Feng Gui Lai Hu) (1983)


Hou’s first wuxia martial arts film is set in 9th century China during the last years of the Tang Dynasty and centres on the invincible Nie Yinniang, an assassin tasked with killing corrupt officials by her master, Jiaxin, the nun was taken away from her age of ten. Shot in glorious 35mm in Taiwan, Japan, and Inner Mongolia at locations that have changed little in decades, the film – the biggest of Hou’s career – is ravishing and inventive.

**Sunday 14 May, 2.00pm**

A Touch Of Zen (Xiao Jue) (1975)


Hou’s semi-autobiographical film looks at life and death, charting the story of his family and his own experiences, growing up as a child and a teenager in rural Taiwan after they relocate from mainland China.

The Assassin (Nie Yinniang) of Hou has ravished the small-town landscapes of his youth. Evoking impressions and strong memories, the placid rhythms of the camera heighten the slow pace of time passing.

It all began because he is able to reason out the death of Ah-hao’s father. In the second, Ah-hao, the principal protagonist of the film, the biggest of Hou’s career – is ravishing and inventive.

Based on Hou’s real-life experiences, this is Hou’s favourite film, his self-proclaimed ‘first city of Kaohsiung where they face the harsh present. In the first, young Ah-hao, turned over to his friends. Then comes his mother’s death, followed by that of his grandmother.

Interwoven intimate memories with national history, Hou’s delicate gaze juxtaposes the tenderness of youth and adolescence with the traumas of growing up, and the traumas of the larger society.


**Sunday 14 May, 9.15pm**

Small Talk (Ri Chang Dui Hua) (1998)


*I was a tomboy ever since I was a child in a small village*. Taiwanese filmmaker Hui-Chen Huang and her aged lesbian mother Ah-Nu set off together on a journey into the past in this intimate documentary.

Married off at a young age as was the custom, An-Uh took off at age 60 to raise her two daughters alone, earning a living as a professional mourner at funerals. In her spare time smoking and gambling with her female friends.

*Why did she ever marry? And why after all these years are her two daughters not grown up?*, one wonders. Questions Huang – now a mother too – asks of her mother. An-Uh decides to tell.

**See You**

**Film:**

See You

**Directors:**

Man-Yun Chen, Pei-Ning Lu

**Screening:**


"We see ourselves as women in disappearing yellow Listening to her mother speak about her life in this touching family film, one sees how time has passed through her life. 

"Me and my mother are like two girls* Taiwanese filmmaker Cindy Yang (Tzu-Hsin Yang)

**Film:**

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**Small Talk gleams with simplicity** – Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Executive Producer