

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**Asian Film Archive Presents**  
*Southeast Asian Digital Cinema*

**Singapore, 23 July 2007** – Over a ten-week period from August, five acclaimed filmmaking groups from Southeast Asia will be showcased in Singapore as a commemoration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN. Filmmakers from these digital film groups will be in Singapore as heralds and proponents of the digital film scene in their respective countries.

Each film group will be the focus of a bi-weekly series of events. The programmes to be held in each series comprise screenings, roundtable talks, dialogue sessions and two-day filmmaking workshops by the representatives from the group. These will culminate in a symposium at the end of the year. Interviews with the filmmakers can be arranged via the Asian Film Archive.

About the Filmmakers and Film Groups (Please refer to **Annex A**)

Timeline and Venues of Events (Please refer to **Annex B**)

In light of the Digital Cinema movement brewing locally, the Asian Film Archive would also like to introduce *Cineodeon*. The programme aims to screen independent films in any location with a screen and is modeled as an informal cinema chain.

*Cineodeon* will be up and running for *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema* which features film screenings at partnering schools and venues with tickets priced at a dollar each. Please look out for *Asian Film Archive* publicity material or visit the *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema* Official Website ([www.asianfilmarchive.org/seadc/](http://www.asianfilmarchive.org/seadc/)) from mid-August onwards for listings of films to be screened and the respective times and venues. All proceeds from ticket sales will benefit the film group in focus.

In line with the launch of *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema*, the Asian Film Archive warmly invites members of the press to several exclusive preview screenings. A selection of films by acclaimed names from the Southeast Asian region will be shown and these digital short films

will later on be publicly screened at our *Cineodeon* locations. The preview screenings will be in a series of five that feature the works of the individual *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema* film groups. More information on later screenings will be released closer to their dates.

The Asian Film Archive thanks you deeply for your kind attention and participation in our event. We also greatly appreciate our featured film groups and filmmakers, others whose generous efforts and support have made *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema* possible, and holds in especial regard, our sponsors and partners:

**Main Sponsor:**

Canon

**Official Hotel:**

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**Official Online Media Partner:**

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**With Support from:**

Media Development Authority

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

National Youth Council

**Research Partners:**

Asia Research Institute

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**Workshop Partners:**

Centre for the Arts, National University of Singapore

Puttnam School of Film, LASALLE College of the Arts

School of Art, Design & Media, Nanyang Technological University

School of Technology for the Arts, Republic Polytechnic

**Screening Partners:**

Bukit Panjang Government High

Centre for the Arts & Exxonmobil Campus Concerts, National University of Singapore

Hwa Chong Institution (College)

Hwa Chong Institution (High School)

Jurong Junior College

Nanyang Girls' High School

Puttnam School of Film, LASALLE College of the Arts

School of Art, Design & Media, Nanyang Technological University

School of Technology for the Arts, Republic Polytechnic

Singapore Chinese Girls' School

**Issued by the Asian Film Archive**

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## **About Asian Film Archive**

The Asian Film Archive ([www.asianfilmarchive.org](http://www.asianfilmarchive.org)) is a non-governmental organisation founded to preserve the rich film heritage of Singapore and Asian Cinema to encourage scholarly research on film, to promote a wider critical appreciation of this art form and to build cultural value of Asian films. Amongst other things, we do outreach programmes through our Moving Minds Project and carry out film preservation with our Reel Emergency Project. As an important nexus, we bring together the various segments of the Asian film community in order to open and enrich new intellectual, educational, and creative spaces.

The Asian Film Archive has built up social capital and a large network linking important Asian filmmakers and scholars. We are governed by an independent board of directors and advised by an international board. The Asian Film Archive is an affiliate of the prestigious International Federation of Film Archives (FIAPF) and a member of the Southeast Asia-Pacific Audio Visual Archives Association (SEAPAVAA). Our collection includes works by some of the most renowned Asian filmmakers in the region.

## **About Asian Film Archive Presents Southeast Asian Digital Cinema**

The advent of the digital cinema new wave is here. At its helm are people closer to us than we think – filmmakers from Southeast Asia who have garnered accolades at film festivals regionally and abroad. The *Asian Film Archive Presents Southeast Asian Digital Cinema*.

Over a ten-week period from August to October, five acclaimed filmmaking groups from Southeast Asian nations will be showcased. Filmmakers representing these digital film groups will be the focus in a bi-weekly series of events. Programmes to be held in each series comprise screenings of works by the group in focus, and a *Round Table* talk, an *In Conversation* session and a filmmaking workshop by the representatives from the group. These will culminate in a symposium at the end of the year with all five of the featured film representatives.

## Annex A

### About the Filmmakers and Film Groups

#### *The Philippines: Khavn de la Cruz of Filmless Films*

“For a few years now, Philippines had its own answer to the Dogma manifesto. It was called Filmless Films. Its leader is Khavn. He has been tireless in organizing events, screening showcases and festivals to promote Filipino digital cinema. Filipino digital cinema has come of age.”

– Philip Cheah, Festival Director, Singapore International Film Festival, Singapore

“The wild, funny, subversive no-budget video of the Philippine punk rebel Khavn is a discovery in the emphasis to the cinema of Southeast Asia.”

– Christoph Huber, Film Critic, Die Presse, Austria

Lauded as the “Che Guevara of the Digital Revolution” and “enfant terrible of Philippine Cinema”, “Renaissance man” **Khavn** is “one of the underground digital cinema’s best-kept secrets”. This prolific and accomplished filmmaker with 16 features and over 60 short films to his name has won awards and been showcased in Europe, Asia and diverse parts of the world. He is the Creative and Managing Director of Filmless Films, his independent digital film company, Oracafe Multimedia Arts Company and Avant-Pop Music, and festival director since 2002 of the .MOV International Digital Film Festival, Philippines’ first digital film festival. In alliance with other Filipino film professionals, he founded the Philippine Independent Filmmakers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (Indie Coop) and has served on the jury of the prestigious Clermont-Ferrand International Short Film Festival (France), Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival (Czech Republic), and Jeonju International Digital Film Festival (Korea). **Khavn** also fronts The Brockas as a singer, songwriter and pianist and his other pursuits include having taught at his alma mater, Ateneo De Manila University, won prizes for his poetry and fiction from the Palanca National Literary Awards, published various writings, and written and composed two rock operas and assorted songs.

#### **Selected Filmography:**

##### **Feature Films**

- *Squatterpunk* (2006)
- *The Family That Eats Soil* (2005)
- *Headless [Pugot]* (2004)
- *Greaseman* (2001)
- *The Twelve* (2000)

##### **Short Films**

- *Literature* (2007)
- *Rugby Boyz* (2006)
- *Can & Slippers* (2005)
- *Amen* (2005)
- *Barong Brothers* (2003)

##### **Awards**

- *Squatterpunk*, Grand Jury Prize at Cinemania International Film Festival, 2006
- *Rugby Boyz*, Best Documentary, 16<sup>th</sup> Rio De Janeiro International Short Film Festival & Special Mention Prize, 52<sup>nd</sup> International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, 2006
- *Greaseman*, Winner, Experimental Video Category, 15<sup>th</sup> Gawad-CCP Alternative Film Festival, 2002
- *The Twelve*, Special Award for Best Full-Length Indie Feature, 14<sup>th</sup> Gawad-CCP Alternative Film Festival, 2000
- *Amen*, Winner, Short Feature Film Category, 12<sup>th</sup> Gawad-CCP Alternative Film Festival, 1999 & Winner-Recipient, 1998 Young Cinema Production Grant, National commission for Culture and the Arts, Mowelfund Film Institute, Philippine Information Agency, and Kodak Philippines, 1998

## Malaysia: Tan Chui Mui of Da Huang Pictures

“As many filmmakers you probably don’t know, you succeed to play with time – and time passing and waitings – to express inner feelings. Many shots are still in my memory...I feel you are filmmaking with a great sensitiveness and a personal point of view on human beings.”

- Philippe Avril, Producer, CEO and International Department Director, Unifrance, France

“Malaysia’s most promising young director.”

- Shelly Kraicer, Editor, Chinese Cinema Digest, Canada

Amir Muhammad, James Lee, **Tan Chui Mui** and Liew Seng Tat established Da Huang Pictures in 2004. It is a film collective based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with the aim of making films as the director envisions. **Chui Mui** has been actively involved in the Malaysian independent film industry, working as producer, editor, scriptwriter and occasionally, actress, besides directing her own films and television programmes. She has completed 2 features and 7 short films to date, which have mostly shown at international film festivals in Europe and Asia. Beginning her career as a columnist in local newspapers and magazines, she showed talent in Chinese writing from a young age, and graduated in Film and Animation from the Multimedia University in Cyberjaya, Malaysia where she tutored. In 2007, she garnered the coveted Tiger Award from the 36<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam with her debut feature film *Love Conquers All*. The film went on to sweep other fêted awards and won her much acclaim in the worldwide scene. Her latest film project *Living Quietly* received the French CNC Script Development Award. **Chui Mui** is currently in Paris with the 14<sup>th</sup> session Cinefondation Cannes Residency.

### Selected Filmography:

#### Feature Films

- *Living Quietly* (2007)
- *Love Conquers All* (2006)

#### Short Films

- *Company of Mushrooms* [蘑菇兄弟们] (2006)
- *A Tree in Tanjung Malim* [丹绒马林有棵树] (2005)
- *Esperando Por Felicidad* [乍然相见] (2003)
- *Hometown* [流逝] (2003)
- *There is Treasure Everywhere* [爸爸的金银岛] (2000)

#### Awards

- Cannes Filmmaker in Residence (2007)
- *Love Conquers All*, Fipresci Award & New Currents Award, 11<sup>th</sup> Pusan International Film Festival, 2006
- *Company of Mushrooms*, In Competition, 35<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2006
- *A Tree in Tanjung Malim*, Principal Prize, 51<sup>st</sup> Oberhausen International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, 2005
- *Esperando Por Felicidad*, Winner, Fly By Night Video Challenge, Singapore, 2003

## *Thailand: Thunskas Pansittivorakul of Thaiindie*

“Beyond [Thunskas] potential for selecting clips and editing them into his film that is able to fascinate the audience into discovering and following “the reality”, ...his...work [is] also outstanding at expressing the emotion and hidden points that would last long in audience’s feelings...This is what many other feature films can’t even succeed [at].”

- Tida Palitpolkarnpim, Film Critic and Editor, Bioscope Magazine, Thailand

“I truly admire Thunskas dedication to films. He is the youngest of the filmmakers in Thailand, a newcomer full of energy. His works mostly represent only one or two characters. But their action and conversations always reflect the wider state of Thai society.”

- Apichatpong Weerasethakul, Director, Thailand

Thaiindie is a non-profit group comprising 25 Thai independent filmmakers formed in late 2004 with the aim of being the center of Thai independent filmmakers whose films are unique and different from most mainstream and formulaic themes. The emphasis on the group is on more creative and innovative works that can show personal artistic expressions, which the group helps promote and distribute, both locally and abroad. They also cooperate with other art communities, organising activities and workshops to groom young filmmakers. **Thunskas** is the founder of [www.thaiindie.com](http://www.thaiindie.com), a website for non-mainstream Thai filmmakers with distinct styles and has made 2 features and 11 shorts that have screened in festivals in Asia and Europe, with several more films and documentaries in the lineup. He graduated with a degree from Art Education from Chulalongkorn University and is a columnist for several magazines including Thai Film Quarterly, Hamburger, Movie Time Weekly, and Cinemag.

### **Selected Filmography:**

#### **Feature Films**

- *Happy Berry* (2004)
- *Voodoo Girls* (2002)

#### **Short Films**

- *Heartbreak Pavilion* (2008)
- *Life Show* (2005)
- *Vous Vous Souviens De Moi?* (2005)
- *Unseen Bangkok* (2004)
- *Private Life* (2000)

#### **Awards**

- Scent of Thai Male: Forbidden Lovers (Thunskas Retrospective), InDblue, Hong Kong, 2006
- *Vous Vous Souviens De Moi?*, Nominee, Tiger Cub Competition, 35<sup>th</sup> International Film Festival Rotterdam, 2006
- *Heartbreak Pavilion*, Pusan Top Award, Pusan Promotion Plan, 10<sup>th</sup> Pusan International Film Festival, 2005
- *Life Show*, Best of DIBA programme, Baumann Short Film Festival, Spain, 2005
- *Happy Berry*, Grand Prize in Asian Vision, 4<sup>th</sup> Taiwan International Documentary Festival, Taipei, Taiwan, 2004

## *Indonesia: Riri Riza of Miles Films*

“Riri Riza, the most celebrated figure in the local industry, whose films, whether his involvement was in direction or in producing, have been milestones for their quality.”

- Hera Diani, The Jakarta Post, Jakarta

“On a variety of visceral and aesthetic levels, Riza’s tightly-budgeted, fourteen-day, one-camera production elegantly out-manuevers anything going on in American independent cinema today...As Riri and his generation of filmmakers are some of the most successful and active in Indonesia today, some might call them the closest thing the industry has to an Establishment.”

- Joanne Sharpe, Honours Student, University of New South Wales, Australia

Miles Films, established in 1995, is a fully owned production company currently headed by Mira Lesmana and **Riri Riza**. They have also initiated the I Sinema film movement with other Indonesian independent filmmakers. Although it started out specialising in documentary and television films production with the provision of a training ground for young talents by producing music videos and television commercials, it has since branched out into digital films and feature film production and managed to garner staying power despite the initial skepticism about its success. Miles Films has even been credited with bringing young Indonesian audiences back to cinemas. **Riri** directs the bulk of its films, producing and writing them as well. He is a household name in Indonesia and has gained international renown. He graduated from the Jakarta Arts Institute with a major in film directing.

### **Selected Filmography:**

#### **Feature Films**

- *3 Hari Untuk Selamanya (Three Days to Forever)* (2007)
- *GIE* (2005)
- *Eliana, Eliana* (2002)
- *Petualangan Sherina (Sherina’s Adventure)* (1999)
- *Kuldesak* (1999)

#### **Short Film**

- *Sonata Kampung Bata* (1993)

### **Awards**

- *GIE*, Special Jury Prize, Singapore International Film Festival & 51<sup>st</sup> Asian Pacific Film Festival, 2006 & Winner, Most Promising Project from Hubert Bals Fund, Pusan Promotion Plan, Pusan International Film Festival, 2002
- *Eliana, Eliana*, Best Young Cinema & NETPAC/FIPRESCI Award, Singapore International Film Festival & Special Mention, Dragon & Tigers Award, Vancouver International Film Festival, 2002
- *Petualangan Sherina (Sherina’s Adventure)*, Special Jury Award, 45<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific Film Festival, 2000
- *Kuldesak*, Nominee, Best Asian Feature Film, Silver Screen Award, Singapore International Film Festival, 1999
- *Sonata Kampung Bata*, Third Place, Oberhausen Short Film Festival, 1994

## *Singapore: Local Documentarians*

“To allow for your subject’s slow unfolding, as a director, to take the back seat to what the matter is on its own accord, this is no small achievement, a laudable and rare exercise in humility.”

- Matthias Ortmann, Reviewer, Sinema.sg, Singapore on James Leong & Lynn Lee

“...Shot and directed to throw light in the darkest places.”

- Tony Rayns, Film Critic-Curator, England on James Leong & Lynn Lee

Amongst the burgeoning group of local documentarians that have debuted to critical success like Chan Kah Mei, Joycelyn Khoo, Li Xiuqi and Mirabelle Ang, are filmmaking husband and wife duo James Leong and Lynn Lee. As one of the key figures on the rising Singapore documentary circuit, their three feature-length documentaries have received nominations at celebrated film festivals including Paris, Berlin and Kuala Lumpur. Based in Asia, they have an interest in “finding unusual stories and telling them well” and have established themselves as documentarians dedicated to portraying the truth in a sensitive manner. Lynn was invited by the United Nations-backed Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation to document the “Truth Hearings” and to help set up East Timor’s first national television station.

### **Featured Films**

- *Aki Ra’s Boys* (2007) by James Leong & Lynn Lee
- *Passabe* (2006) by James Leong & Lynn Lee
- *I Love Malaya* (2006) by Chan Kah Mei, Ho Choon Hiong & Eunice Lau
- *Match Made* (2006) by Mirabelle Ang
- *Seletar Airbase: Singapore’s Secret Garden* (2006) by Li Xiuqi
- *Singapore Standard Time* (2006) by Joycelyn Khoo & Serene Ng

### **Awards**

- *Aki Ra’s Boys*, Official Selection, Cinema du Reel, Singapore International Film Festival & Thessaloniki International Film Festival, 2007
- *Passabe*, Winner, Humanitarian Award for Documentaries, Hong Kong International Film Festival, 2006

## **Annex B**

### **Timeline and Venues of Events**

\*All programmes are open to the public except for filmmaking workshops.

#### *Asian Film Archive Presents Philippines – **Filmless Films: Khavn de la Cruz***

20-24 August Screenings  
24 August Round Table @ Asia Research Institute  
25 August Directing Asia: In Conversation @ library@esplanade  
27-28 August Filmmaking Workshop @ NTU ADM

#### *Asian Film Archive Presents Malaysia – **Da Huang Pictures: Tan Chui Mui***

2-7 September Screenings  
7 September Round Table @ Asia Research Institute  
8 September Directing Asia: In Conversation @ library@esplanade  
6-7 September Filmmaking Workshop @ RP STA

#### *Asian Film Archive Presents Thailand – **Thaiindie: Thunskā Pansittivorakul***

17-21 September Screenings  
21 September Round Table @ Asia Research Institute  
22 September Directing Asia: In Conversation @ library@esplanade  
24-25 September Filmmaking Workshop @ NUS CFA

#### *Asian Film Archive Presents Indonesia – **Miles Films: Riri Riza***

1-5 October Screenings  
5 October Round Table @ Asia Research Institute  
6 October Directing Asia: In Conversation @ library@esplanade  
8-9 October Filmmaking Workshop @ LASALLE PFS

#### *Asian Film Archive Presents Singapore – **Local Documentarians***

15-19 October Screenings  
19 October Round Table @ Asia Research Institute  
21 October Directing Asia: In Conversation @ library@esplanade

5-9 November Screenings

10-11 December Symposium @ National Library

Please visit the *Southeast Asian Digital Cinema* Official Website ([www.asianfilmarchive.org/seadc/](http://www.asianfilmarchive.org/seadc/)) from mid-August onwards for listings of screened films and specific times and venues.