Founded in 2005, the Asian Film Archive (AFA) is a charity that aims to save, explore, and share the art of Asian Cinema. Through preservation, research, education, and publication, the Archive hopes to promote the cultural value and appreciation of Asian films. As of 1 January 2014, the AFA became a subsidiary of the National Library Board.
On 1 January 2014, exactly 9 years after it had been established, the Asian Film Archive (AFA) made the decision to come under the National Library Board’s (NLB) umbrella. In its first 9 years, AFA had worked hard, creatively, and urgently, mostly with minimal resources and a skeletal staff supported by enthusiastic volunteers, to preserve and promote many Asian cinematic gems. The efforts paid off. Year after year, I had, as Chair, the distinct pleasure of highlighting for the annual reports, a rich programme of activities, new additions to an increasingly valuable collection of films, and a wide range of achievements that were remarkable for a fledgling organisation such as ours.

The last few years, however, had been financially challenging. We persevered with our core activities, while working doubly hard to raise funds to keep ourselves going. 2013 proved to be equally challenging. But like the previous years, we continued to organise and participate in a range of events that supported our Mission.

The AFA collection has increased to 1,675 titles and a total of 11 film titles were screened to thousands of audiences. There were several new initiatives and partnerships. For instance, we organised screenings for seniors from the Young Women’s Christian Association and talks for cinema-goers at Filmgarde Cineplex. In the area of cinema scholarship, we supported the project “Chinese Cinemas in the 21st Century: Production, Consumption, Imagination”, funded by the Leverhulme Trust’s International Networks scheme and helmed by the University of Exeter (UK). We also actively participated in training related to film and audiovisual archive preservation at the Film Restoration School Asia and the 17th annual conference of the Southeast Asia Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association.

The move to join NLB at the start of the year came at the end of a two-year period of exploring potential partnerships and negotiation with a number of interested institutions and agencies, both local and overseas. NLB turned out to be an ideal partner. Its commitment to preserving and making accessible Singaporean and Asian heritage could be readily aligned with the AFA’s mission. NLB would be able to help AFA to grow in capacity, expand our operations, and scale up our programmes to make a greater impact. Our collection can be seen by a wider spectrum of audiences through a broader array of platforms and programmes.

Under NLB, the Archive will continue to be a charity with IPC status, retaining a Board of Directors with a variety of expertise to guide and oversee our executive team. It will continue to have an International Advisory Board comprising of archivists, filmmakers, and scholars in film and other related academic fields. Together with NLB, we met with Singapore-based filmmakers and wrote to filmmakers around the region who have deposited films with us. This was a critical step in the move to join NLB. Not surprisingly, the response was resoundingly positive.

As we begin a new chapter in the AFA’s history, I recall the many organisations and individuals who have supported us throughout our journey. I would like to thank all of them, including the numerous volunteers, donors, and stakeholders who have sponsored our work and championed our cause and efforts. In particular, I would like to thank the AFA’s staff, past and present, for working so hard, passionately, and tenaciously. Our founding Executive Director, Tan Bee Thiam, current Executive Director, Karen Chan, Archivist, Chew Tee Pao, and Administrator, Ethan Yeo, kept the boat afloat even in the choppiest of seas. It was also a pleasure and honour to work with Directors who, at various points, served on the previous AFA Board, including Susan Beard, Glen Goei, Han Minli, Ong Sor Fern, Jacqueline Tan, and Mike Wiluan. Glen and I look forward very much to working closely with new Board Directors, Eric Chin, Gene Tan, and Angela Wong.

As we approach the end of our first decade, we at the AFA realize that we have many things to celebrate and reflect on as we plan for the next decade. We count on your continued support as we work together to save, explore, and share our precious cinematic heritage!

Associate Professor, Kenneth Paul Tan
Chair, Asian Film Archive
A major event for the Asian Film Archive (AFA) took place in January 2014 with the Archive becoming a subsidiary of the National Library Board (NLB). This was a culmination of a lengthy period of talks and negotiations to ensure that the best arrangements were made for the AFA’s collection, stakeholders and staff. With the operational financial challenges largely resolved, the AFA team can focus its attention on improving its programmes and increasing its collection.

**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Presentations**

One of the first collaborative efforts between AFA and NLB was the joint organisation of a series of film screenings for the public libraries. The first screening series “Fade In / Fade Out” took place in February 2014, showcasing four Singaporean short films and a Q & A session with the filmmakers. These short films all had the theme of experiencing and discovering something new. In March, the Indonesian award-winning, coming-of-age film *Laskar Pelangi (Rainbow Troops)*, about ten village children’s life-changing experiences after meeting two inspirational teachers, was screened as part of the NLB’s *Last Play* series.

In an effort to continually enhance the professional skills and capacity of its staff, the AFA enrolled its Archive Officer, Chew Tee Pao, to the six-day programme of the Film Restoration School Asia held at the National Museum of Singapore. Organised in collaboration with the Cineteca di Bologna, L’Immagine Ritrovata, World Cinema Foundation, the programme provided training on current issues surrounding film preservation and restoration while offering practical training on current restoration and archival best practices. Karen Chan, (AFA’s then Acting Director), was a panellist for the session on “Film Archives in Asia”, together with the Film Archive (Thailand) and the National Film Archives of the Philippines. The panellists shared their organisations’ missions, archival policies and restoration activities and analysed the intricacies of film archiving and restoration in Asia. The panel discussed the challenges faced in the region and how to enable sustainable practices in film preservation and restoration.
The AFA supported the research project “Chinese Cinemas in the 21st Century: Production, Consumption, Imagination”, funded by the Leverhulme Trust’s International Networks scheme. Established scholars from across disciplines came together to present research papers. A two-day workshop on Producing Chinese Cinemas in the 21st Century, was jointly organised and sponsored by the University of Exeter (UK), the School of Social Science of Singapore Management University, supported by the Asia Research Institute of National University of Singapore and the Asian Film Archive. The workshop brought together Malaysian and Singaporean directors and producers in panel discussions. A roundtable discussion on “Staging Film for Research: Institutions, Ownership and the Archive” brought together the public, independently run and private organisations. Speakers included Eric Chin (Director, National Archives of Singapore), Derek Tan (filmmaker and founder of Viddsee.com), and Karen Chan (Asian Film Archive) to discuss the various issues involving the usage and archiving of films.

AFA was also involved in the region’s archiving scene with Karen Chan serving on the Executive Council of SEAPAVAA (Southeast Asia Pacific Audiovisual Archive Association) and helping to organise the 17th SEAPAVAA Conference and General Assembly in Bangkok. The conference had a two-day Symposium on the topic of ‘Redefining the Audiovisual Archives in the Digital Age’ that attracted over 120 delegates from Asia, the Pacific, Europe and North America.
The AFA collection totalled 1,675 titles as of 31 March 2014. Amongst its new acquisitions were 123 reels of 35mm positive prints and 38 reels of 35mm original negatives. The films acquired consisted of Asian award winning and notable works including Outrage by Takeshi Kitano that competed for the Palme d’Or at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival and a documentary tribute to the late Indonesian legend Haji Misbach Yusa Biran.

AFA supported the restoration of Maynila Sa Nga Kuko Ng Liwanag (Manila in the Claws of Light) by the late Filipino director, Lino Brocka, by facilitating the loan of a surviving release print to the World Cinema Foundation and the Film Development Council of the Philippines. The print was used by the restorers as a point of reference, aiding in the film’s full restoration. Maynila premiered at the Cannes Classics section during the Cannes Film Festival 2013.

**COLLECTION**

**Key acquisitions**

- Echoes of the Rainbow
- The Song of Sparrows
- A Separation
- Outrage
- Gubra
- Lost in Paradise
- Behind the Flickering Light (The Archive)
- Money No Enough 2
- Being Human
- One More Chance

**Preservation & Restoration**

As more filmmakers are filming on tapeless formats and storing their final work products in various file formats on external hard drives, the AFA like many other archiving institutions, has had to manage between preserving analogue and the increasing influx of digital formats. For 2013, the AFA had yet to implement a full digital preservation process. However, part of the long term outcomes of becoming a subsidiary of the National Library Board is that from 2014 onwards, the AFA is able to confidently accept digital formats since the AFA is able to tap onto the digital preservation storage available to the AFA at the National Archives of Singapore.

*Manila in the Claws of Light* (1975) by Lino Brocka
As part of AFA’s efforts to encourage an appreciation of Asian films, a range of outreach events and education related activities were organised throughout the year, reaching out to over 2,600 educators, students and the general public. AFA’s films were also available for public reference through a collection at the library@esplanade.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION

• Presentations

During the year, AFA organised public screenings of Asian films, thereby creating avenues for less accessible cinematic works to be viewed by different audiences. Two of the films curated as part of the Archive’s ‘AFA Presents’ series, Year Without a Summer and Mekong Hotel, had premiere screenings in Singapore. Post-screening events were also conducted to generate audience engagement and discussion with the filmmakers.

AFA collaborated for the first time with the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) to bring the joy of cinema to needy elderly citizens. The seniors were treated to an afternoon of cinematic nostalgia as they swayed and hummed to the tunes of the effervescent Grace Chang (葛兰) in Mambo Girl.

Some of the films screened during the year were:

- Boy in Jogja by Kan Lume
- Dai Bao by Yee Chang Kang
- Good Morning 60 by Samantha Wee
- Mambo Girl by Evan Yang
- Mekong Hotel by Apichatpong Weerasethakul
- Moon Over Malaya by Chun Kim
- Passenger by Green Zeng
- Rainbow Troops by Riri Riza
- The Tiger Factory by Woo Ming Jin
- Tickets by Sherman Ong
- Year Without A Summer by Tan Chui Mui
Educational workshops and talks

Specially tailored talks and workshops were conducted on topics such as ‘Film Literacy and Its Application in the Classroom’, ‘Introduction to Social Issues in Singapore through Documentaries’ and perennial popular topics like ‘Introduction to Singapore Cinema’ and ‘Film Appreciation’.

Some of the schools that participated in the Archive’s programmes included:

* Dunman High School
* Nanyang Girls’ High School
* NUS High School of Mathematics and Science
* St Joseph’s Institution
* West Spring Secondary School

AFA partnered Filmgarde Cineplex to present a new outreach programme comprising of talks and workshops, entitled Filmtalks. A talk on The Art of Film Critiquing featured a panel of speakers that included John Lui (Straits Times film reviewer), Shawne Wang (Deputy Editor, F*** Magazine) and Stefan Shih (film blogger of A Nutshell Review). A second talk on Gender in Film had Dr. Brenda Chan, an independent scholar on film speak about Royston Tan’s 881 and Associate Professor Kenneth Chan from the University of Northern Colorado Film Studies / Chair of AFA’s International Advisory Board, focusing on Yonfan’s Bugis Street. Both talks were well attended by cinema goers and film enthusiasts.
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

Governance Practices

- The Archive is governed by a board of directors who ensures that the Archive is effective in pursuing its mission and is accountable to the public.

- All board members are volunteers and are not remunerated for their Board services. They are wholly independent from the paid executive management of the Archive. Board members hold various responsibilities to review and oversee areas in audit and finance; programmes and services; fundraising and partnership; and human resource.

- The Executive Director leads the management team to execute strategies, policies and business practices. The Executive Director reports regularly to the Board about the Archive’s management, operations and finances.

- Board members or paid staff are required to declare actual or potential conflicts of interest to the Board immediately. Board members with conflicts of interest do not vote or participate in decision making in the matter. Paid staff with conflicts of interest are required to obtain approval from the Board. All staff and Board make an annual declaration of having understood all policies, procedures, and potential conflicts of interest between staff and the Archive.

- Board meetings are held quarterly to review the Archive’s performance and approve strategic work plans. The Chair convenes optional meetings when necessary, to discuss matters that require the Board’s deliberation.

- To promote transparency and to be publicly accountable, the Archive makes available an annual report in print and on its website, with disclosure on its financial accounts.

- The Archive adopts a set of internal guidelines that lay out financial authorisation and approval limits for financial commitment. The Board ensures that the internal reviews on controls, procedures and key programmes are adhered to.

As a registered charity and an Institution of Public Character, the Archive complies with the Code of Governance issued by the Charity Council.
FUTURE PLANS AND COMMITMENTS

The Archive regards its role as custodian to Asia’s rich film heritage seriously and will strive towards managing its collection responsibly. Providing access to the collection, generating well curated screenings and education programmes that meet the needs and demands of its users and researchers, remain a top priority. As part of the larger body of the National Library Board, the AFA envisages an expanded operations in its various departments, including a wider range of screening programmes at the public libraries and other community events and venues.

Purposeful partnerships with national and international organisations will be established and maintained to promote Asian cinema and to advance the archiving profession. Acquisitions will be explored and negotiated to increase the collection for public use and research.

The AFA looks forward to growing its team with dynamic, passionate and visionary staff members to support its expanding operations in the coming year. We are keenly aware of the important roles that the different stakeholders play in building the strength of this institution. We will therefore continue to actively engage our board members, staff, volunteers, partners and donors.

We remain committed to our mission to save, explore and share the art of Asian Cinema.
In keeping with standard practices amongst archives, the Asian Film Archive does not capitalise its collections. It does not have an endowment fund and the only investment income is from interest.

The Archive received a loan from its holding company, National Library Board (NLB) in March 2014. With the Archive joining NLB from 1 January 2014, AFA’s financial reporting period will be aligned to NLB’s. As such, the financial report period of FY2013 was for a 15-month timeframe (Jan-Dec 2013 and Jan-Mar 2014).

The summaries presented below are the Archive’s financial position and performance for the extended FY2013 period, with financial statements as of 31 March 2014. The financial statements were audited by S.H. Ong LLP, Public Accountants and Certified Public Accountant Singapore.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

March 31 2014

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<th>ASSETS</th>
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### Breakdown of Incoming Resources from Generated Funds

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012 (S$’000)</th>
<th>2013 (S$’000)</th>
<th>1 Jan 2013 - 31 Mar 2014 (15 months) (S$’000)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grants / Sponsorships</td>
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<tr>
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<th>1 Jan 2013 - 31 Mar 2014 (15 months) (S$’000)</th>
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<tr>
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<th>2012 (S$’000)</th>
<th>2013 (S$’000)</th>
<th>1 Jan 2013 - 31 Mar 2014 (15 months) (S$’000)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
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<td>Operating/Administration expenses</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Others</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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### Balance Sheet

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<th>1 Jan 2013 - 31 Mar 2014 (15 months) (S$’000)</th>
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<td>Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Land and Building</td>
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<td>Plant and Equipment</td>
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<td>Investments</td>
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<td>Inventories/Stocks</td>
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<td>Accounts Receivable</td>
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<td>Total Funds</td>
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<td>Total Liabilities and Funds</td>
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### Other Information

<table>
<thead>
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<th>2012 (S$’000)</th>
<th>2013 (S$’000)</th>
<th>1 Jan 2013 - 31 Mar 2014 (15 months) (S$’000)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Donations/Grants and sponsorship given to other charities (S$’000)</td>
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<td>Total Employee Costs (S$’000)</td>
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<td>Number of Employees in remuneration bands above S$100,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of key management in remuneration bands above S$100,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Each acquisition, preservation, restoration, film programme, presentation, exhibition, workshop and talk would not have been possible without our donors and supporters. We thank them sincerely for their generosity.

Donors – above S$5000
Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple
Lee Foundation
Vincent Chin

Donors
Eric Chin
Ho Vui Chan
John Lui
Kenneth Chan (Assoc Prof)
Maggie Yin
Patrick Ang
Tan Swee Gek
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Supporters

Alfian Sa‘at
Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Brenda Chan (Asst Prof)
Cathay-Keris Films Pte Ltd
Chew Yi Wei
Da Huang Pictures
Doris Young
Dorothy Ding
Ethan Yeo
Filmgarde Cineplex
Glen Goei
Green Zeng
Han Minli
Hansfort Investment Pte Ltd
Ho Swee Ann
Imin Teo
Irene Lim
June Chua
Kan Lume
Kenneth Paul Tan (Assoc Prof)
Lighthouse Pictures
Lim Song Hwee (Assoc Prof)
Megan Wonowidjoyo
Melissa Kawasoe
National Archives of Singapore
National Library Board
National Museum of Singapore
Cinematheque
Nikki Tok
Ong Sor Fern
Philip Cheah
Raphael Millet
Ray Edmondson (Dr)
Royston Loh
Samantha Wee
Shawne Wang
Stefan Shih
Susan Beard
Tan Bee Thiam
Tan Chui Mui
Tan Pang Ren
The Arts House
The Match Factory GmbH
Thomas Chia
Timothy P. Barnard (Assoc Prof)
Trina Ha
Tyrone Sato
William Phuan
Woon Chet Choon
Yanzo Fang
Yee Chang Kang

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January - December 2013
Dr. Kenneth Paul Tan
(Chair, 2005 - 2013)
Glen Goei
(2011 - 2013)
Jacqueline Tan
(2005 - 2013)
Ong Sor Fern
(2005 - 2013)
Susan Beard
(2009 - 2013)
January 2014
Dr. Kenneth Paul Tan
(Chair, 2014 - )
Angela Wong
(2014 - )
Eric Chin
(2014 - )
Gene Tan
(2014 - )
Glen Goei
(2014 - )

STAFF

January - December 2013
Karen Chan
Acting Director (September
2010 - December 2013)
Chew Tee Pao
Archive Officer
Tsoi Wai Yee
Student Intern
January 2014
Karen Chan
Executive Director
Chew Tee Pao
Archivist

CONSULTANTS

Karen Chai
Accountant
Samuel Seow Law Corporation
Legal Consultant
Trina Ha
Corporate Secretary
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

Apichatpong Weerasethakul
Filmmaker

Dr. Aruna Vasudev
President of NETPAC (Network for Promotion of Asian Cinema)

Professor Chris Berry (PhD, UCLA)
Professor of Film and Television Studies, Goldsmiths College, University of London

Professor Chua Beng Huat (PhD, York)
Professor of Sociology, National University of Singapore

Professor Chua Tat Seng (PhD, Leeds)
Professor, School of Computing, National University of Singapore

Professor David Bordwell (PhD, Iowa)
Jacques Ledoux Professor of Film Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Professor Howard Besser (PhD, UC Berkeley)
Director of New York University’s Moving Image Archiving & Preservation Program

Hou Hsiao Hsien
Filmmaker

Professor Jan Uhde (PhD, Waterloo)
Professor of Film Studies, University of Waterloo

Dr. Kenneth Chan (PhD, Florida)
Associate Professor of Film Studies, School of English Language and Literature, University of Northern Colorado

Dr. Kenneth Paul Tan (PhD, Cambridge)
Associate Professor, Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore

Dr. Lim Song Hwee (PhD, Cambridge)
General Editor, New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film

Professor Rey Chow (PhD, Stanford)
Andrew W. Mellon Professor of the Humanities, Brown University

Dr. Ray Edmondson (PhD, Canberra)
Director, Archive Associates

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PHOTO CREDITS

Still from Mekong Hotel
Courtesy of The Match Factory GmbH

Photograph from Film Restoration School Asia 2013
Courtesy of National Museum of Singapore

Still from Manila In The Claws of Light
Courtesy of Mike de Leon

Still from White Days
Courtesy of 13 Little Pictures

Still from The Tiger Factory
Courtesy of Greenlight Pictures

Still from Good Morning 60
Courtesy of Samantha Wee

Still from Forever Fever
Courtesy of Tiger Tiger Films

Still from Tickets
Courtesy of Sherman Ong
In the digital age, and contrary to popular belief, moving image preservation has become even more complex. It’s not just analogue film that is in danger of destruction or decay: digital heritage is being lost too, because of its transient nature. Film makers need to rely early on the advice and services of professional bodies like the Asian Film Archive.

Dr Ray Edmondson
Director, Archives Associates
Chairman, UNESCO Memory of the World Committee for Asia Pacific (2013)

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