

Manchester film festival highlights success of Hong Kong film industry since 1997

Hong Kong's vibrant and successful film industry is the focus for a series of events being held in Manchester, UK in July. As part of its series of events to mark the tenth anniversary of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in London is supporting "Made in Hong Kong: A Decade of New Cinema," a film festival organised by the Cornerhouse, Manchester's international centre for film and contemporary visual arts.

Concentrating on the ten-year period 1997 – 2007, the film season offers police thrillers (Election2), horror (Dumplings) and art house classics (In The Mood For Love) as well as more unknown experimental short films.

The film season kicked off on July 7 with a symposium involving leading academics debating issues related to Hong Kong films over the decade, which touched on such areas as shifting notions of identity, the legacy of colonialism and relations with the mainland. The symposium organised in partnership with the University of Salford and hosted at Chinese Arts Centre, Manchester featured speakers such as Teresa Kwong (Director of ifva, Hong Kong Arts Centre), Julian Stringer (University of Nottingham) and Andrew Willis (University of Salford).

Speaking at the Symposium, Sarah Wu, Director General of HKETO London said: "As a cosmopolitan city where the east meets the west, Hong Kong has been the place for talented people to unleash their creativity and pursue their dreams. Through this symposium and the film festival, we hope people will be able to experience the diversity and vibrancy of Hong Kong.

"We have developed into a regional centre for film planning, production, manpower training, marketing and overseas promotion. When Disney decided to enter a new market with its first Chinese language animated feature The Magic Gourd, it chose a Hong Kong-based company, Centro Digital Pictures to be one of the key production partners.

"The Hong Kong Government has been playing its part behind the scenes to encourage the film industry. We're promoting 'Hong Kong on location' as a film centre with the facilities, expertise and support for every movie occasion. And this year's Budget set aside HK\$300 million for the establishment of a new fund to help finance film production and overcome the shortage of talent. It will provide all-round support to the local film industry, including training and overseas promotion.

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For further information on Made in Hong Kong A Decade of New Cinema, visit www.cornerhouse.org/madeinhongkong.