

FOCUS ASIA

Documentary Film Festival 8-9 December 2010

Urban Docs Asia: Identities, Memories, and Struggles in Asian Cities

8 December

9.30-10.30

Invisible City (Singapore)
Directed by Tan Pin Pin

10.30-10.40 Break

10.40-11.45

Happy Together (China)
Directed by Zhu Yingwen

11.45-13.00 Lunch break

13.00-14.35

Yokohama Mary (Japan)
Directed by Takayuki Nakamura

14.35-14.45 Break

14.45-15.35

Saacha (India)
Directed by KP Jayasankar and
Anjali Monteiro

Q&A with director 20 min

16.00-16.30

Neighbourhood Tokyo (Japan)
Directed by Theodore C. Bestor

16.30-16.50 Break

16.50-18.15

Meishi Street (China)
Directed by Ou Ning

Evening programme

20.30-22.30

Diminishing Memories I and II
(Singapore)

Directed by Eng Yee Peng

Q&A with director 20 min.

9 December

9.30-10.40

Public Blue (Japan)
Directed by Anke Haarmann

10.40-10.50 Break

10.50-11.35

Naata (The Bond), (India)
Directed by KP Jayasankar and Anjali
Monteiro

Q&A with director 20 min

12.00-13.00 Lunch break

13.00-13.35

Side Effects: Portrait of a Young Artist
in Lahore (Pakistan)
Directed by Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh

13.35-13.45 Break

13.45-15.25

Street Life (Nanjing Lu) (China)
Directed by Zhao Dayong

15.25-16.00 Break

16.00-17.30

Beijing is Coming (China)
Directed by Li Zhaoxing



Organized by the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies
Venue: Kino, Kyrkogatan 3, Lund



For more information please see www.ace.lu.se

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Urban Docs Asia: Identities, Memories, and Struggles in Asian Cities

8 December

9.30-10.30: Invisible City (Singapore), Directed by Tan Pin Pin

Invisible City is a documentary about documenteurs. The director interviews photographers, journalists, archaeologists, people propelled by curiosity to find a City for themselves. The documentary conveys how deeply personal their search is and how fragile histories are, hanging on only through their memories and artefacts. Interwoven with the interviews is never seen before footage and photos of the City culled from their private archives. In Invisible City, you witness the atrophy of memory, you see a City that could have been.

10.40-11.45: Happy Together (China), Directed by Zhu Yingwen

97 Yuanmingyuan Road, Shanghai, used to be the Panama Consulate General, now it houses several dozens of blue-collar working families. Narrow corridors and compact spaces has not hindered the friendships among the residents. However, when the Friendship Store across the Street is going to be demolished and they receive a notice to relocate because of the new development of the area, the residents realize that their life is going to be changed sooner than they expect.

13.00-14.35: Yokohama Mary (Japan), Directed by Takayuki Nakamura

An old lady who's make-up is as white as a Kabuki actor and dressed in an aristocratic dress, is standing in the streets of Yokohama. She has concealed her real name and age, and for 50 years after the war, has lived her life as a prostitute. She has been known as the most beautiful prostitute of her time and her elegant presence has become part of the city's scenery. People call her "Yokohama Mary".

14.45-15.35: Saacha (India) Directed by KP Jayasankar and Anjali Monteiro

Saacha is about a poet, a painter and a city. The poet is Narayan Surve, and the painter Sudhir Patwardhan. The city is the city of Mumbai (a.k.a. Bombay), the birth place of the Indian textile industry and the industrial working class. Both the protagonists have been a part of the left cultural movement in the city. Weaving together poetry and paintings with accounts of the artists and memories of the city, the film explores the modes and politics of representation, the relevance of art in the contemporary social milieu, the decline of the urban working class in an age of structural adjustment, the dilemmas of the left and the trade union movement and the changing face of a huge metropolis.

16.00-16.30: Neighbourhood Tokyo (Japan), Directed by Theodore C. Bestor

Miyamoto-cho is a community of Mom-and-Pop stores and family enterprises located near the center of Tokyo. Competition from supermarkets and shopping centers threatens the livelihoods of long-term residents. High land prices tempt owners to tear down old homes and replace them with apartment buildings; this in turn is changing the composition of the population. Against this backdrop, residents strive to maintain the close social ties, symbols of local identity, and community rituals that keep Miyamoto-cho from becoming just another mailing address. Theodore Bestor began his research here in 1979. His prize winning book of the same name is available through Stanford University Press.

16.50-18.15: Meishi Street (China), Directed by Ou Ning

Meishi Street shows ordinary citizens taking a stand against the planned destruction of their homes for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. In order to widen traffic routes for the Olympic Games, the Beijing Municipal Government orders the demolition of entire neighborhoods. Several evictees of Meishi Street, located next to Tiananmen Square, fight through endless red tape and the indifference of fellow citizens for the right to keep their homes. Given video cameras by the filmmakers, they shoot exclusive footage of the eviction process, adding vivid intimacy to their story.

20.30-22.30: Diminishing Memories I and II (Singapore), Directed by Eng Yee Peng

Singapore's economy is one of the strongest in Asia. However, has anyone contemplated what Singapore's prosperity has been built on? Since 1960s, the government started resettling people from all over the country to make way for industrialisation. Decades have now passed and villages eventually replaced by tall buildings. Today, there are no more villages left in Singapore. What is at stake now is the living memories of village life in Singapore are dying. This film takes you on a personal journey with me, the filmmaker, to recollect my childhood memories of living in Lim Chu Kang, a village that has already died and its spirit dispersed.

9 December

9.30-10.40: Public Blue (Japan), Directed by Anke Haarmann

Homeless people in the Kansai region hold demonstrations with supporters after the government forcibly removes them from the parks of Osaka in 2006. Drawing on statements made by Fukuzawa Yukichi and Maruyama Masao, the film speculates on conceptions of "the park," "public," "conflict," "social order," and "freedom" in Japan. By attempting to define the "homeless" living under blue plastic sheets in public spaces, it questions the government's actions in its own unique way. The well-thought-out, playful framing offers excellent analysis of a very "Japanese" issue, and reminds us of various other cases of exclusion imposed by the authorities in Japanese society today.

10.50-11.35: Naata (The Bond), (India), Directed by KP Jayasankar and Anjali Monteiro

Naata is about Bhau Korde and Waqar Khan, two activists and friends, who have been involved in conflict resolution, working with neighbourhood peace committees in Dharavi, Mumbai, reputedly, the largest 'slum' in Asia. This film explores their work, which has included the collective production and use of visual media for ethnic amity. Waqar and Bhau's work raises several uncomfortable questions for the filmmakers, so-called modern, middle-class, secular, urban beings. Naata juxtaposes the multi-layered narrative on Dharavi and the 'stories' of the filmmakers, thereby attempting to foreground a critical and active viewership. Naata is the second in a series on the people and the city of Mumbai. It is a sequel to Saacha (The Loom), 2001.

13.00-13.35: Side Effects: Portrait of a Young Artist in Lahore (Pakistan), Directed by Mashhood Ahmed Sheikh

Lahore is the second largest city of Pakistan with a population of more than 10 million. The city is famous for exquisite food, its rich culture, as an education capital and as the core of Pakistan's media and arts scene. The film takes us deep into the life of a struggling young middle-class art student in Lahore.

13.45-15.25: Street Life (Nanjing Lu) (China), Directed by Zhao Dayong

Street Life explores the hidden lives of homeless migrants who survive in the shadows of one of Shanghai's most historic and affluent streets. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Chinese migrants are drawn to the allure of Shanghai, one of the world's most vibrant cities, with hopes of earning a decent living. Some end up in the dark alleys of Nanjing Road, Shanghai's largest shopping street, where they learn to hustle and scrape together any kind of living they can. One migrant, known as Black Skin, faces numerous pressures in his daily existence, including police violence. Black Skin's story intersects with those of fellow bottle collectors, enterprising thieves and even a young boy who was abandoned. Eventually Black Skin goes mad, dancing wildly through the crowds of Nanjing Road and in the doorways of luxury shops.

16.00-17.30: Beijing is Coming (China), Directed by Li Zhaoxing

Beijing, Summer 2008. As the world rushes to China's capital, where do Beijingers go? Backdropped by the 2008 Olympics, Chic China Chic author Bono Lee's film mixes fact and fiction to explore the culture and identity of the new Beijing. An old man looks for traces of the city he left 40 years ago. A young woman decides to leave the city she grew up in. Searching for people and places of past and present, BEIJING IS COMING documents the transformation of Beijing, and the changing values of China's post-80s generation.

For more information
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