

CENTER FOR EAST ASIAN STUDIES  
FRIDAY NOON FILM SERIES

PRESENTS

Korean Civilization: Perspectives In Film

This series will be presented by East Asian Civilization: Korean Civilization Staff.

April 11: Chihwaseon

Im Kwon-Taek, 2002, 117 minutes – presented by Grace Chae

Chihwaseon tells a story of Jang Seung-Up, a prominent painter in late nineteenth century Chosun. Born to a humble family in 1843, Jang proves to have a remarkable natural talent as well as being a colorful individual. Despite social discrimination and misunderstanding, he succeeds in finding his own way of painting, earning the nickname “chihwaseon,” which means “drunken master of painting.” Adorned with the sublime beauty of traditional Korean painting, the film was honored with the Best Director Award at Cannes in 2002. Korean with English Subtitles

April 18: Les Insurgés

Shim Jae-Hyeong, 2001, 101 minutes

High hopes were placed on “Les Insurgés”, the Korean-French co- production becoming the first Korean film chosen for the competition section of the Cannes Film Festival. Residents in Che-ju Island were suffered from some Catholics’ misbehavior and too heavy taxation in 1901. Although a commoner Lee Jae-Soo knew about that the leader of rebellion should be responsible for all the results and willingly choose the death after rebellion, he volunteers a leader, leaving his lover, Sook Hwa, alone. The battle starts. Lee finally captures the castle, but a French fleet has already headed for Che-ju. In the meantime, Lee lays down his life for himself after obtaining the promise on correction in religion and taxation by the government. Korean with English Subtitles

April 25: Silence Broken: Korean Comfort Women

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, 1999, 57 minutes – presented by Suzy Wang

A powerful and emotional documentary by film about Korean women forced into sexual servitude by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II. “Silence Broken” dramatically combines the testimony of former comfort women who demand justice for the “crimes against humanity” committed against them, along with contravening interviews of Japanese soldiers, recruiters, and contemporary scholars who deny the existence of comfort women or claim that these victims “did this for money”. The film clearly details that what comfort women want today is not financial compensation, but a measure of personal honor and vindication in the form of an official apology from Japan. “Silence Broken” seeks to shatter the half-century of silence regarding these forgotten victims of war. The individual testimonies in the film, combined with rare archival footage and dramatized images, create a collective story which embodies the spirit and fortitude of all comfort women.

Camp Arirang

Diana S. Lee & Yoon Kyung Lee, 1995, 28 minutes – presented by Grace Chae

For decades, since the Korean War, thousands of Korean women have been working as prostitutes for American soldiers. In Camp Arirang, the filmmakers explore the lives of the sex workers and their fatherless Amerasian children who live in US camp towns throughout South Korea. Through interviews with the workers, soldiers, scholars and through contemporary and archival footage, the film reveals the story of how the Korean government and the US military have cooperated in the sale and control of women’s bodies. Featured is a charismatic ex-prostitute, Yon Ja Kim, who now devotes her life to the welfare of older sex workers and their biracial children.

May 2: Korea: The Unknown War, Part I, II  
Thames TV, 1988, 110 minutes  
Documentary of the Korean War. In English

May 9: JSA (Joint Security Area)

Park Chan-Wook, 2000, 110 minutes

In the North Korean guard post on the “Bridge of No Return” in the Joint Security Area, 2 North Korean soldiers were murdered by a gunshot. And the suspect of this incident, Lee Soo-Hyuk (Lee Byung-Heon), a wounded South Korean Soldier, is found in the middle of the Military Division Line. The incident is very provocative for both the South and North Korean sides. The North blamed the South with “terrorist raid attack” scenario while the South blames the North with “kidnapping” scenario. Both sides decide to resort to the help of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission (NNSC) (comprised of Swiss and Swedish delegates) to thoroughly investigate the incident. Behind the incident, there is another story. Korean with English Subtitles

May 16: Our Twisted Hero

Park Chon-Won, 1992, 119 minutes – presented by Mikael Wolfe

This is the story of the dreams, agony, discord and friendship of a group of country school boys before the beginning of Korea’s economic boom in the late 50s and 60s. The story begins with Han Byung-tae, a lecturer at a college entrance preparatory institute, recalling his primary school days, 30 years ago. Byung-tae’s father was transferred at that time into a rural area from his government office in Seoul. Byung-tae started attending the local school, there he meets Um Suk-dae, the class monitor and bully. At first there is conflict between the two boys but eventually Byung-tae submits to the oppression. A new teacher, Kim Chong-won takes charge of the class and begins to put all the wrongs right by teaching the boys about equality, justice, truth, courage and democracy. Korean with English Subtitles

May 23: A Forgotten People: The Sakhalin Koreans

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, 1995, 59 minutes – presented by Suzy Wang

This is a documentary about the forced Korean laborers on Sakhalin island, the victims of the World War II and the Cold War, initially indentured by Japan, then fallen into the hands of a new master, the Soviet Union in 1945 and forgotten for half a century. Korean with English Subtitles

May 30: Peppermint Candy

Yi Chun-dong, 1999, 127 minutes – presented by Robert Oppenheim

Peppermint Candy is the personal history of a man whose troubled experiences leave him greatly disturbed. Many of the episodes in our hero’s life echo the contemporary history of Korea: serving in the military, torturing political dissidents as a policeman and losing money in a failed business venture. These symbolic events mingle with the personal aspects of his life: an early love affair, which continues to haunt him years later, and his subsequent failed marriage. As one of the most anticipated films of 2000, Peppermint Candy was chosen as the opening film of the 1999 Pusan International Film Festival. Korean with English Subtitles

ALL SCREENINGS ARE FREE AND TAKE PLACE AT JUDD 302, BEGINNING AT 12:40 PM. FEEL FREE TO BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH TO EAT WHILE WATCHING THE FILMS!