



Taiwanese United Fund
celebrate cultural diversity

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PRESS RELEASE

Los Angeles Taiwanese Film Festival

James Bridges Theatre, UCLA
December 12-14

LOS ANGELES – UCLA and The Taiwanese United Fund present the *premiere* Los Angeles Taiwanese Film Festival featuring award winning films plus **Academy Award contender** “Cape No. 7” which grossed nearly \$10 million dollars in its opening month, trumping Ang Lee’s “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon” and setting a new box office record in Taiwan! Quirky and compelling social, political and environmental themes of the nine documentary and feature films include: a new take on an old martial arts film where breakdancing replaces kung fu in a Taiwanese street dance/ breakdance competition; a glimpse at the lives of Chiang Kai-shek’s displaced soldiers; the estrangement of young lesbians in contemporary Taiwan; Asia’s “King of Pop” Jay Chou in an epic romance about a piano prodigy; the design and creation of the fastest running solar powered car for a 3,000 kilometer race in Australia; creating new spawning grounds for squids; and a documentary about Taiwan’s Golden “Dance Age” of the 1920’s and 30’s. Admission FREE to all films except Cape No. 7. --All films will be in Chinese with English subtitles—

With its unique and rich cultural heritage, Taiwan has produced such internationally recognized directors as, Ang Lee, Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Edward Yang. During Taiwanese Film Festival 2008, viewers will be treated to the next generation of great directors from Taiwan and the new breed of prominent feature and documentary films that reflect the quality, range and vitality of contemporary Taiwanese filmmaking.

Festival highlight *Cape No. 7*, the debut feature by director Wei Te-Sheng (former assistant director under the legendary Edward Yang), has secured Taiwan’s nomination as contender for the Best Foreign-language Film Oscar. With a mere \$1.5 million budget, this new release is no Hou Hsiao-Hsien style art-house movie. The blockbuster snapped up both the Jury’s Award and the Audience’s Choice Award at the Taipei International Film Festival, and more recently, the Golden Orchid Award at the Hawaii International Film Festival. It trumped Ang Lee’s *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* by setting a new box-office record in Taiwan—more than six times its budget in gross revenue in just the opening month!

Cape No. 7 was submitted by Taiwan's Information Office as Taiwan's contender for the Best Foreign Language Oscar. The Academy's foreign language film committee will review some 60 entries in that category from all over the world, and will announce its Oscar nomination on January 20.

A total of five feature films and four documentaries will be shown at the 3 day festival. Selected feature films are *Chocolate Rap*, *Secret*, *Cape No. 7*, *Do Over* and *Reflections*. Documentary selections include *For More Sun*, *Squid Daddy's Labor Room*, *Grandma's Hairpin* and *Viva Tonal* (a.k.a. *The Dance Age*).

Festival activities include an opening introduction of the Taiwanese cinema by UCLA Prof. Robert Chi, a keynote speech on the social and cultural milieu in which those films were made, and a roundtable discussion about making a debut feature.

"In contrast to the early 1980s' New Wave cinema, which focused on a realistic portrayal of everyday life, emerging directors in Taiwan have produced a great deal of genre-driven movies that are reinvigorating the movie industry in Taiwan. Chocolate Rap and Cape No. 7 are trend-setting milestones in this new breed of film," states TUF President and Festival Director, Yung Kao.

TUF, the initiator of the festival, has been engaged in cultural exchanges since 1986. Through collaboration and networking with other organizations and academic institutions, TUF has grown to become a leading Taiwanese American association in the United States to celebrate the Taiwanese cultural heritages and America's cultural diversity.

FESTIVAL SCHEDULE:

Friday December 12:

7– 8:30 pm – Opening wine and hors d'oeuvres reception, "An Overview of the Taiwanese Cinema Today" by
UCLA Prof. Robert Chi

8:30 – 10:15pm - *Chocolate Rap*

Saturday December 13:

9:30 – 11:30 am – *Secret*

11:30 – 1:20 pm – *For More Sun*

1:20 – 3:00 pm – *Grandma's Hairpin*

3:00 – 5:00 pm – *Viva Tonal*

5:00 – 6:30 pm – Roundtable Discussion - "Feature Length Debuts"

7:00 – 9:30 pm – *Cape No. 7* (Ticket required)

Sunday December 14:

9:30 – 10:40 am - *Squid Daddy's Labor Room*

10:40 – 12:25 pm – *Reflections*

12:25– 2:35 pm – *Do Over*

3:00 – 5:10 pm – *Cape No. 7* (Ticket required)

5:10 – 6:10 pm – Closing Ceremony, Private Reception, Keynote Speech: "Between the Glimpses of Films"

6:10 – 8 pm – After Party Reception (Ticket required)

FILM DESCRIPTIONS:

Chocolate Rap - Friday 7:00-8:30pm

2005 | 82 Mins | Drama/Dance | G

Dir. Lee Chi-Yuen (Feature-length Debut)

Breakdance is hip-hop dancer Choco's heart and soul. In this competition of a lifetime he realizes that the purpose of dance is not purely to win a competition. Through the universal languages of Bach, Hip-hop and breakdance the director deftly captured the down-to-earth Taiwanese flavors in this light-hearted film. A UCLA alumnus, Lee Chi-Yuen is the most acclaimed screenplay writer in Taiwan today. In this heart-warming tribute to the spirit of WW-II generation Taiwanese, Lee redefines that spirit in the young, diverse X-ers generation.

Awards & Festival Selection:

Asian Young Directors Award, The 6th Kao-Hsiung Film Festival

Taipei Films Award, The 8th Taipei Film Festival , Hong Kong Asian Film Festival

Tokyo Film Festival, 2005 , Holland Asian Film Festival, 2006

London Taiwanese Film Festival, opening feature film , The 9th Festival Icaro

Secret – Saturday 9:30am – 11:30 am

2007 | 101 Mins | Drama/Romance | G

Dir. Jay Chou (Feature-length Debut)

Asia's King of Pop, Jay Chou wrote the screenplay and some of the original score, directed the film and played the lead character as a high school piano prodigy. A composition entitled "Secret" leads to a galactic romance that reaches across the boundary of time and space with superb cinematography and soundtrack.

Awards:

Best Original Score, the 44th Golden Horse Award, 2008 , Best Visual Effects, the 44th Golden Horse Award, 2008 Best Composer, the 19th Golden Melody Award, 2008

For More Sun – Saturday 11:30am – 1:20pm

2006 | 95 Mins | Documentary | G

Dir. Lee Jong-Wang

This documentary follows a dedicated professor and determined mechanical engineering students at Taida (National Taiwan University) on a courageous journey of **building a solar-powered car from scratch** (including the solar panels) for a 3,000-kilometer race in the 2005 World Solar Challenge in Australia. The film tracks Professor Cheng and his students as they devote six years of their lives to build FORMOSUN III, a world-class solar car, with the hope of entering the car into the 2005 World Solar Challenge.

Festival Selection:

2006 Taipei Film Festival, 2006 Taiwan International Documentary Festival

Grandma's Hairpin - Saturday 1:20 - 3:00 pm

2000 | 89 Mins | Documentary | PG-13

Dir. Hsiao Chu-Chen

This stunning documentary captures the unique life stories of veterans who are among **some 500,000 soldiers who left their families and followed Chiang Kai-shek's retreat to Taiwan in 1949** while in their early 20s or late teens. When the government finally lifted the ban on private visits to China about 40 years later, they found themselves in an awkward limbo where they could no longer adapt themselves to living in China, while putting down their roots in Taiwan also proved to be challenging.

Awards & Festival Selection:

Best Documentary, Golden Horse Awards, 2000 , Taiwan Awards, Taiwan International Documentary Festival, 2000 , Seoul International Film Festival , Asian Pacific Film Festival , Amsterdam International Documentary Festival, The 51st Asian Pacific Film Festival

Viva Tonal (a.k.a. The Dance Ages) - Saturday 3:00 – 5:00 pm

2003 | 104 Mins | Documentary | G

Dir. Chien Wei-ssu + Kuo Chen-ti

"I'm a cultured woman, traveling about footloose and fancy-free" --so begins a lilting tune from Taiwan's "Dance Age" of the 1920s and '30s, a paradoxical time when the island's occupation by Japan also brought youth culture and a measure of artistic freedom. Women smoked cigarettes, love scandals were rife, and risqué Taiwanese pop was born. This lively historical documentary mixes engaging interviews with catchy songs, hauntingly deteriorated period footage, and reenactments of the unrequited romance between the lovely chanteuse Sun Sun and her songwriter Chen Chun-yu. Oldies DJ Li Keun-cheng and songstress Ai-Ai, a recording star of the time, take viewers through this nostalgic journey.

Awards:

Best Documentary, Golden Horse Award, 2003 , Taiwan International Documentary Festival, 2004

Cape No. 7- ACADEMY AWARD CONTENDER - (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R87DOcl2rOw>)

Saturday 7:00 – 9:30 pm & Sunday 3:00 – 5:10 pm

2008 | 35 mm | 130 Mins | Drama | G

Dir. Te-Sheng Wei (Feature-length Debut)

In a down-to-earth, uniquely Taiwanese style, Director Wei (formerly assistant director to the legendary Edward Yang) exquisitely portrays **a hidden love from 1940's Japanese-occupied Taiwan**. Unable to disclose his affection for a Taiwanese woman prior to returning to Japan, a Japanese teacher revealed his love in unforgettably passionate letters. Although these letters weren't mailed until some 70 years later, they ignited a series of events and became a catalyst of another inter-cultural love affair. Even without a strong promotional campaign, this movie attracted widespread popularity in Taiwan and has become the highest grossing film produced on the island. The romantic comedy film is registered to compete in the 2008 Golden Horse Award and the 81st Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film. The film's honest depiction of daily life in southern Taiwan is an important element to its box-office success. Cape No. 7 moves audiences with its passion and lures by its lavish presentation of South Taiwan's breathtaking scenery through its top-notch cinematography. For his next film, Wei will get a 20% production subsidy in accordance with the recently-amended Taiwanese Film Production and Box Office Subsidy Regulations.

Awards:

Jury's Award, Taipei International Film Festival, 2008, Audience's Choice Award, Taipei International Film Festival, 2008 , Best Cinematography, Taipei International Film Festival, 2008
Grand Award, Tokyo Asian Marine Film Festival, 2008
Golden Orchid Award, Hawaii International Festival, 2008

Squid Daddy's Labor Room - Sunday 9:30 – 10:40 am

2007 | 56 Mins | Documentary | G

Dir. Koh Chin-Yuen

This ecological documentary tracks a conservationist's quest to recreate the spawning grounds for squids off the northeastern coast of Taiwan, with the help of a passionate team of volunteers. The director captures the team's successful efforts as well as the astounding beauty of the deep ocean scenery.

Award & Festival Selection:

2007 Best TV Picture, Montana CINE Film Festival
2007 Honorable Mention for Human-Nature Interactions, Montana CINE Film Festival
2007 Honorable Mention for Music/Sound, Montana International Wildlife Film Festival
2007 Green Film Festival in Seoul
2007 Green Wave 21st Century European Environment Festival
2007 Indian Environment and Wildlife Film Festival

Reflections - Sunday 10:40 am – 12:25 pm

2006 | 87 Mins | Drama | PG

Dir. Yao Hung-I (Feature-length Debut); Producer: Hou Hsiao-Hsien

A long-time cinematographer for Hou Hsiao-Hsien, Yao mirrors Hou's attempt to capture the malaise of youth in contemporary Taiwan and turns in a visually accomplished drama. Clearly influenced by Hou's distinctive style and aesthetics, Reflections has an affinity for formalism that is rich in symbolism. Through the relationship of two lesbians and their common male friend, the film presents a story about youths dealing with estrangement and their ambiguous attitudes toward love and lust.

Awards:

Young Directors Award, the Nantes Three Continents Festival
Best Cinematography, the Argentina International Film Festival
Best Supporting Actress, Golden Horse Awards

Do Over - Sunday 12:25– 2:35 pm

2006 | 35 mm | 113 Mins | Drama | PG-13

Dir. Chen Yu-Chieh (Feature-length Debut)

This ambitious debut follows five characters with playfully deconstructed time sequences and blurred lines between reality and fantasy. The director renders a stunning picture of anemic young people in modern Taiwan struggling to make sense of their lives in a society whose identity as a whole is unclear.

Awards & Festival Selection:

Best Original Film Score, Formosa Film Award, 2006

Best Film Editing, Golden Horse Awards, 2006
Grand Prize, Audience's Choice Award, Taipei International Film Festival, 2006
Athens Film Festival, 2006
Pusan International Film Festival, 2006
Tokyo International Film Festival, 2006
Vancouver International Film Festival, 2006
Venice Film Festival, 2006

The film festival is being organized by TUF, in collaboration with UCLA and the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office in Los Angeles. The inaugural event will offer a representative yet diverse cross-section of Taiwan's contemporary cinema. The festival is expected to attract serious film buffs interested in the current state of Taiwanese film, as well as more casual fans eager to enjoy a top-notch slate of best Taiwanese films in recent years.

For more information visit: <http://www.tufusa.org/news/news/htm> OR
<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=9016250892>

LOCATION: screenings at: **James Bridges Theatre** (1409 Melnitz Hall, UCLA): 405 Hilgard Avenue
Westwood, California 90024 United States 310-206-8013 <http://www.cinema.ucla.edu>