



aperture:
asia & pacific
film festival

journeys in moving image through Asia & the Pacific

London/part 1: 4–13 June 2019

Birkbeck Cinema / Close-Up Cinema / The Lexi Cinema /
Regent Street Cinema / Rio Cinema

London/part 2: 11–14 September 2019

On tour around the UK: July–October 2019

www.day-for-night.org/aperture

Aperture: Asia & Pacific Film Festival 2019

London / part 1: 4–13 June
London / part 2: 11–14 September
On tour: July–October

Following its launch last year, Aperture returns for its second edition, continuing our commitment to presenting some of the boldest, most daring and striking films from the Asian and Pacific regions to wide and diverse audiences across the UK. Aperture seeks to bridge the gap within the UK festival landscape as the only UK film festival to cover the whole of the Asian region and also to explore Oceania, as well as reflecting on the inherent links and blurred boundaries between Asia and the Pacific, particularly within transnational contexts.

Aperture aims to present a stronger platform for cinema from the Asian and Pacific regions, bringing some of the freshest new independent Asian films and moving image works alongside classic titles and lesser-known historical works to UK audiences, with a particular focus on under-represented and under-acknowledged areas of cinema. Aperture's curatorial philosophy centres on challenging the boundaries of cinema and reflecting on moving image culture and practice, both through form and content.

Aperture is a collaborative initiative, seeking to forge strong partnerships with other like-minded festivals and organisations. We're delighted to be partnering with Essay Film Festival, London Korean Film Festival, MUBI and NANG for this second edition. We're also thrilled to be working on a joint programming initiative with Dharamshala International Film Festival in northern India. We'll be showing three outstanding South Asian films that featured in their last edition and we look forward to seeing Aperture titles reaching audiences in the Himalayas later this year!

The festival is presented in London in two parts - part 1 taking place 4-13 June, and part 2 including a focus on Singaporean director Daniel Hui from 11-14 September, while the festival will tour various locations around the UK from July to October.

Presented by Day for Night in partnership with the Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media (CREAM), University of Westminster

www.day-for-night.org/aperture

Hosted by:

day for night*

Day for Night is an independent organisation working across film exhibition, distribution and screen translation. Day for Night seeks to take distinctive contemporary and classic films to wide and diverse audiences across the UK and further afield, with the central aim of enabling broader access to visual culture through specialist distribution and curatorial projects.

Festival principal partner:

CREAM

The Centre for Research and Education in Arts and Media (CREAM) is an interdisciplinary research centre within University of Westminster comprised of 45 researchers and over 65 PhD students. The centre is made up of six primary fields of research: art, science and technology; experimental media; film; music; photography; visual and ceramic arts.

Opening film:

The Gentle Indifference Of The World

Adilkhan Yerzhanov, Kazakhstan 2018, Kazakh/Russian + English subtitles, 100 mins, UK Premiere

Following her father's death, Saltanat is forced to swap her quiet rural life for the city to find ways to pay off a debt left behind by her father in order to save her mother from prison. Her loyal yet penniless friend and admirer, Kuandyk, follows her to make sure she is safe. What ensues is a noir-esque road trip, as the two of them run into trouble and desperately seek to find a way out.

Official selection: Un Certain Regard, Cannes Film Festival 2018

Tue 4 June: Rio Cinema



Closing film:

BNK48: GIRLS DON'T CRY

Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit, Thailand 2018, Thai + English subtitles, 110 mins, UK Premiere

Thamrongrattanarit digs deep into the emotions of the girls who form the 48 strong Bangkok band BNK48, modelled on the Japanese idol band AKB48, in which only 16 of the girls are chosen for each recording or performance. The girls talk openly about their feelings – what it's like to be the most popular girl, never being chosen to perform, and the pressures of a never-ending popularity contest.

International Premiere: Busan International Film Festival 2018
European Premiere: International Film Festival Rotterdam 2019

Thu 13 June: Rio Cinema



Poetic Voices: A Trip Through The Taiwanese Avant-Garde Of The 1960s

The 1960s marked a period in Taiwanese film history, which for the most part was dominated by mainstream popular Taiwanese language films and strong censorship, amid a repressive political climate. However, a growing movement of young intellectuals and artists, increasingly influenced by Western avant-garde movements, began experimenting with film, challenging the boundaries of cinema, and presenting their own bold responses to the concept of the avant-garde.

The films in this programme were the subject of intensive research conducted by the Taiwan International Documentary Film Festival curatorial team and were presented at the festival last year. These unearthed works defined a period of cutting-edge experimental moving image within Taiwanese cinema. Formed of fragments and traces, some were without sound, and these works will be shown with an accompanying soundtrack.

These discoveries were made thanks to some of these surviving artists, now in their 70s and 80s, and other collaborators around the world. This programme presented by Aperture, hinges on two key figures within this movement, Richard Chen, one of Taiwan's most reputed documentary filmmakers, and Mou Tun-fei, an often under-acknowledged yet ground-breaking Taiwanese filmmaker.

Richard Chen's *The Mountain* portrays three art students, one of whom is Mou Tun-fei, as they discuss their place as aspiring artists within the current political climate of Taiwan and their views on the Vietnam War, all set against a backdrop of *The Mamas and the Papas* song *California Dreamin'*. Mou Tun-fei later went on to direct *The End of the Track*, a film which was banned for its sensitive political nature and homosexual undertones.

With thanks to Taiwan Film Institute for supporting this screening



Accompanying music soundtrack courtesy of Rocket Girl



The Mountain

Richard Yao-Chi Chen, Taiwan 1966, Mandarin + English subtitles, 20 min, restored from 16mm

A Morning in Taipei

Pai Ching-ju, Taiwan 1964, 20 min, silent, restored from 35mm

Modern Poetry Exhibition/1966

Chang Chao-tang, Taiwan 1966, 12 min, silent, restored from 8mm

Life Continued

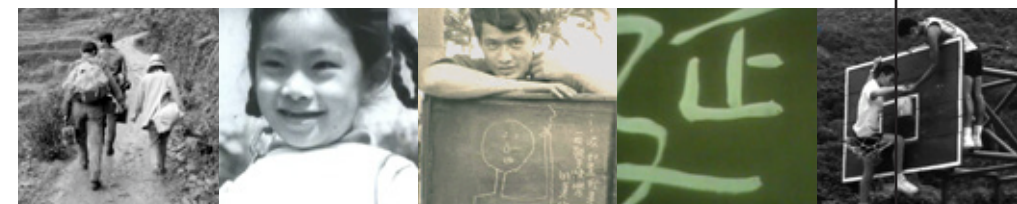
Chuang Ling, Taiwan 1966, 14 min, silent, restored from 16mm

+ intro to shorts programme by Dr Victor Fan, Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, King's College London

The End Of The Track

Mou Tun-fei, Taiwan 1970, Mandarin + English subtitles, 91 mins, restored from 35mm
Banned during the Kuomintang regime for its homosexual undercurrents and for its political overtones, *The End of the Track* is a landmark in Taiwanese cinema. Friends Tong and Yong-sheng are inseparable. When Yong-sheng dies in an accident, Tong's life plunges into darkness.

Wed 5 June: Close-Up Cinema



Renewal: Artists' Moving Image From New Zealand

This curated programme of artists' moving image from New Zealand explores themes of (re)awakenings, endings, memories, and renewal. Curated by Mark Williams, CIRCUIT Artist Film and Video Aotearoa New Zealand

+ intro



Thu 6 June: Close-Up Cinema



Aperture x NANG:

Kuldesak

Nan Triveni Achinas, Mira Lesmana, Rizal Mantovani, Riri Riza, Indonesia 1999, Indonesian + English subtitles, 100 mins

An omnibus of four short films inspired by the Dogme95 movement, this film marked an important transition in Indonesian filmmaking and its aesthetics by providing an avenue to imagine filmmaking as a personal creative venture, and a departure from filmmaking as part of a socio-political disposition that was controlled by the dictatorial state. Portraying individualism, dreams and loneliness in an urban environment, this omnibus captures the artists' aspirations for filmmaking to be a tool for personal expression as well as to redefine identity politics in one of the most ethnically and socially diverse nations in the world.

+ intro by Eric Sasono, Indonesian film critic and PhD candidate at King's College London

This screening is jointly presented with NANG to mark the launch of the latest issue of NANG, Issue 6: Manifestos

NANG

Thu 6 June: Close-Up Cinema



The Sweet Requiem

Tenzing Sonam/Ritu Sarin, India 2018, Tibetan + English subtitles, 91 mins

A young Tibetan woman who lives in exile in Delhi, is secretly haunted by an incident from her childhood. As a child she fled Tibet with her father, making a perilous journey on foot across the Himalaya, which ended in tragedy. One evening she unexpectedly encounters the guide who abandoned them on that journey. As memories are reawakened, she embarks on a quest for the truth, culminating in a final confrontation. A gripping drama offering a perspective on the reality of escape from Tibet, with a glimpse into a less familiar story of migration and the refugee experience.

World Premiere: Toronto International Film Festival 2018

+ panel discussion

+ short film:

The Open Door

Jamyang Jamtsho Wangchuk, Bhutan 2018, Dzongkha + English subtitles, 15 mins, London Premiere

It was an age-old custom in Bhutan to leave front doors open, only closing them before going to bed. This four-act short follows the life of Pema, from birth to adulthood, spanning over half a century. Each act represents a different season and a different phase in her life – from the time of Bhutan's bartering trade with Tibet in the early 20th century through to democracy in the 21st century.

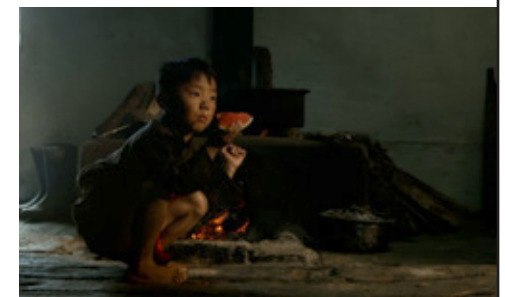
World Premiere: Locarno Film Festival 2018

Asian Premiere: Busan International Film Festival 2018

In partnership with Dharamshala International Film Festival
diff.co.in



Fri 7 June: Birkbeck Cinema



Asia Through The Aperture Workshop 2

Aperture: Asia & Pacific Film Festival 2019 in partnership with CREAM, University of Westminster, hosts a second workshop continuing discussions arising from the first Asia Through The Aperture Workshop held last year. Asia Through the Aperture is an ongoing discussion series exploring contemporary and historical Asian moving image culture and art and reframing discussions around 'curating Asia' and moving image practice. This second workshop will address issues around present day artistic approaches to history, and in particular finding radical approaches to presenting history through curatorial practice.

+ curated shorts programme:

Mud, Drones And Spirits

Who is your primary audience? Is it human? This screening presents a selection of recent works of artists' moving image from Asia that stages a dialogue between human and nonhumans. These works see the beyond human as also entities that embody history, speculate futures, and tell their own stories. Together they question the assumption that humans are the only audience of cinema.

Curated by May Adadol Ingawanij and Julian Ross.

Sat 8 June: Birkbeck Cinema



Aperture x Essay Film Festival:

Nakorn Sawan

Puangsoi Aksornsawang, Thailand 2018, Thai + English subtitles, 77 mins, UK Premiere

Following the death of a mother, a family set out on a spiritual boat journey to accompany her to "heaven". In parallel, a documentary on the director's parents and ultimately her mother's passing unfolds. A hybrid of fiction and documentary, this intriguing debut blurs the distinctions between memory, fact and fiction in a quiet contemplation on life and death.

World Premiere: Busan International Film Festival 2018

European Premiere: CPH: DOX 2019

This screening is held in partnership with BIMF/Essay Film Festival

ESSAYFILMFESTIVAL

Sat 8 June: Birkbeck Cinema

The Gold-Laden Sheep & The Sacred Mountain

Ridham Janve, India 2018, Gaddi + English subtitles, 97 mins, UK Premiere

In this mystical drama set in the Indian Himalaya, one day as an old shepherd and his servant tend to their sheep and goats, a fighter jet crashes in a distant valley. The servant schemes to make his fortune by scavenging the jet's parts, but the shepherd insists they continue on their migratory path. When they emerge the other side, they discover that despite air force helicopters and rescue teams, neither pilot nor wreckage has been found. The shepherd becomes convinced that the crash occurred near the 'Sacred Mountain', where, according to legend, a rich herdsman once vanished. On news of a reward, the shepherd sets out in search of the wreckage and the pilot, leading to tragedy.

Official selections: International Film Festival Rotterdam 2019

In partnership with Dharamshala International Film Festival



Sat 8 June: Close-Up Cinema



A Touch Of Zen

King Hu, Taiwan 1969, Mandarin + English subtitles, 179 mins, cert 12A

Combining martial arts, ghost story and Buddhist mythology, this classic wuxia film paved the way for the likes of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *House of Flying Daggers*. A painter and his mother live near an allegedly haunted abandoned mansion. Unknown to them, a warrior and her mother have taken refuge there following the assassination of their loyal minister father by the wicked Wei. After an army is sent to pursue the escapees, the group fortify the mansion with traps and false intimations of the ghosts within. However, things take more unsettling turns...

Sun 9 June: Lexi Cinema





Picnic At Hanging Rock

Peter Weir, Australia 1975, English, 115 mins, cert PG

On Valentine's Day, 1900, a party of schoolgirls from Appleyard College picnicked at Hanging Rock near Mt. Macedon in the state of Victoria, Australia. A group of girls and a teacher walked off towards the rock, drawn to its mystical nature, some never to be seen again. The inexplicable disappearance sparks an obsession in the search for the missing among all involved. Peter Weir's cinematic adaptation of Joan Lindsay's beguiling novel is a beautifully shot, unsettling, eerie tale that remains as potent today as when it was first released in 1975, with its dreamlike mixture of horror, mystery and suppressed love. A classic masterpiece, beautifully restored in 2K.

Sun 9 June: Regent Street Cinema



Aperture x MUBI:

Nervous Translation

Shireen Seno, Philippines 2018, Tagalog/English + English subtitles, 90 mins, cert PG

8 year old Yael is a shy, contemplative girl, who lives with her mother, while her father works abroad. Her only connection to him is the recorded tapes he sends her mother, which she secretly listens to incessantly. When she sees a TV ad for a pen that can translate nervous thoughts, she becomes obsessed in finding this 'magic' pen. Set in 1988, the film captures a certain moment in Philippine history, while drawing connections to today – the complexity of the family unit and migration, an obsession with consumer electronics, and the power of nature to remind us of what really matters.

World Premiere / NETPAC Award, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2018
UK Premiere: Tate Modern / Berwick Film & Media Arts Festival 2018

This screening is jointly presented with MUBI



Sun 9 June: Regent Street Cinema



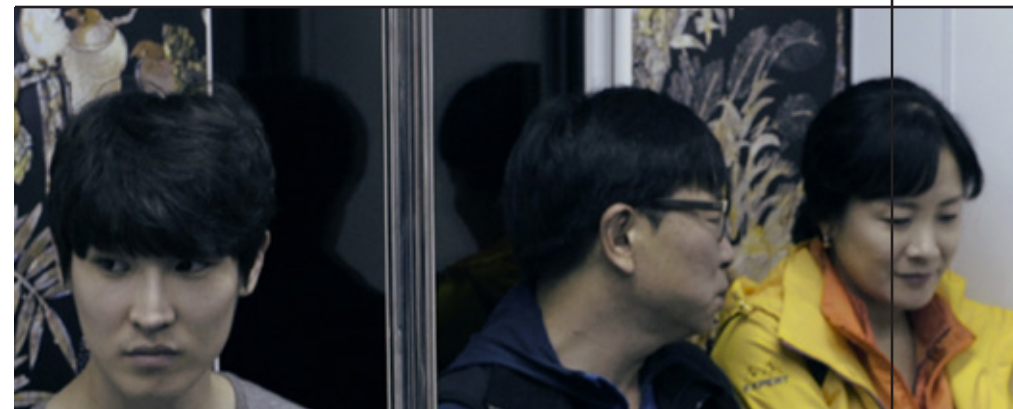
Ayka

Sergey Dvortsevoy, Russia/Germany/Poland/Kazakhstan/China 2018, Russian/Kyrgyz + English subtitles, 100 mins, UK Premiere

Exploring the plight of young female Kyrgyz refugees in Moscow, Ayka centres on one young woman's harrowing story, powerfully portrayed by Sergey Dvortsevoy with a standout performance by Samal Yesyamova in the role of Ayka. A story of struggle and survival in the face of extreme hardship and exploitation as an illegal migrant worker.

In competition: Cannes Film Festival 2018

Tue 11 June: Rio Cinema



Aperture x London Korean Film Festival:

Autumn, Autumn

Jang Woo-jin, South Korea 2016, Korean + English subtitles, 78 mins, UK Premiere

Jihyun has an interview in Seoul before taking a train home, sitting next to a middle-aged couple. After failing his interview, Jihyun drowns his sorrows and narrowly escapes a dangerous situation thanks to a friend. They head to a temple, but he misses the last ride home. The middle-aged couple also head to the temple, opening up to each other as they recall memories of their first loves. The night passes like a dream before they head back to Seoul...

World Premiere: Busan International Film Festival 2016

This screening is jointly presented with London Korean Film Festival



Korean Cultural Centre

Tue 11 June: Lexi Cinema

Kabul, City In The Wind

Aboozar Amini, Afghanistan/Netherlands/Japan/Germany 2018, Farsi + English subtitles, 88 mins, London Premiere

In this unassuming documentary, Aboozar Amini presents the parallel 'normal' everyday lives of 12 year old Afshin and his younger brother Benjamin, and a bus driver in war-torn Kabul. This nuanced film is a love letter to a city and a country ravaged by war, in which its inhabitants strive for a better life in the face of adversity.

World Premiere: International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam 2018 – Opening Film

Wed 12 June: Rio Cinema



Eye On The Ball

Yihwen Chen, Malaysia 2019, Malay/English + English subtitles for the hard-of-hearing & audio-description, 79 mins, World Premiere

Losing their vision didn't stop a group of blind boys aiming to become professional footballers. Led by their impassioned coach, the amateur team unexpectedly win gold at the 2015 ASEAN Para Games. However, they have their title to defend at the 2017 ASEAN Para Games in Kuala Lumpur and must improve their world rankings to qualify for the World Blind Football Championship. A moving portrait of overcoming obstacles and reaching for one's dreams.

Date & venue tbc



Related Non-Festival Screening:

Die Tomorrow

Nawapol Thamrongrattanarit, Thailand 2017, Thai + English subtitles, 75 mins, cert 12A, London Premiere

Comprising six segments, this heavy theme is tackled with wit and a delicate touch by Thamrongrattanarit. Death often comes unexpectedly – what happens the day before is usually quite ordinary. Friends celebrate their graduation, siblings meet again, a couple separates... An uplifting reflection on fate and the fleeting nature of life.

International Premiere: Berlinale 2018

Wed 12 June: BFI Southbank

London / part 2: 11–14 September

Director Focus: Daniel Hui

Alongside his new film *Demons*, Aperture will present a focus on Singaporean experimental filmmaker Daniel Hui who will be in attendance. This focus continues Aperture's commitment to throwing a spotlight on outstanding young Asian filmmakers, following on from a series of events last year with Filipino filmmakers Shireen Seno and John Torres from the collective Los Otros.

Daniel Hui is a filmmaker and writer from Singapore. His films have been screened at film festivals around the world including Rotterdam, Busan, Yamagata, DocLisboa, FIDMarseille, Singapore, Taipei, Seoul, Bangkok, Manila and Vladivostok. He is one of the founding members of 13 Little Pictures, an independent film collective whose films have garnered critical acclaim internationally.

This will be the first complete show of Daniel Hui's body of work to date including:

Demons

Daniel Hui, Singapore 2018, 84 mins, English, UK Premiere

Ambitious young actress Vicki lands the lead part in a new theatre production. What appears to be the opportunity of a lifetime turns out to be the beginning of a story of abuse of power at the hands of director Daniel, for whom sadistic violence and artistic practice are inseparable. However, power dynamics can change, and ultimately Vicki rises above the persistent abuse and exacts her revenge.

World Premiere: Busan International Film Festival 2018
European Premiere: Berlinale 2019

Snakeskin (2014, 105 mins)

Eclipses (2011, 104 mins)

Animal Spirits (2013, 9 mins)

No Images (2011, 9 mins)

Rumah Sendiri (2010, 21 mins)

Sayang (2010, 8 mins)

One Day In June (2010, 11 mins)

Wanderlust (2009, 5 mins)

Dreams Of Youth (2008, 24 mins)



Asia Through The Aperture Workshop 3

The next workshop in the Asia Through the Aperture series will consider documentary filmmaking in Asia, with a particular focus on Southeast Asia.

Aperture 2019 on tour: July–October

Catch Aperture screenings in various venues and locations around the UK between July to October.

Full details for Aperture: London / part 2 and Aperture 2019 on tour will be announced in the summer.

Full programme & info: www.day-for-night.org/aperture

Festival Team

Artistic Director: Sonali Joshi

Festival Producer: Chonpel Tsering

Festival Consultant/Shorts Curator: May Adadol Ingawanij

Shorts Curator: Julian Ross

Festival Coordinator: Duncan Harte

Graphic Design: Xiaofeistudio


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