**Co-Presented by the Hong Kong Arts Centre and U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong & Macau**

**Director of Oscar-Winning *Minari***

**Cries and Whispers: Film Retrospective of Lee Isaac Chung**

**29.7 – 6.8.2022**

**Louis Koo Cinema, Hong Kong Arts Centre**

**UB, 2 Harbour Road, Wanchai**

**Tickets are available now on POPTICKET.hk**

[](https://www.hkac.org.hk/calendar_detail/?u=wZpNYw7RYzo)

The **Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC)** andthe **U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong & Macau** will co-present a moving image programme focusing on **Lee Isaac Chung, the director of Oscar-winning *Minari*** - **Cries and Whispers: Film Retrospective of Lee Isaac Chung** - at the **Louis Koo Cinema, Hong Kong Arts Centre** from **July** **29 to 6 August 2022**. This programme screens five feature films by Chung, from his Cannes recognised debut *Munyurangabo* to his Oscar honoured historic milestone *Minari*. Our screenings will be accompanied by **talks** and a **masterclass** with Chung. **Guests to attend our live talks virtually include Lee Isaac Chung, Amanda Plummer (multiple Emmy and Tony Award-winning actress, roles include Honey Bunny of Quentin Tarantino’s *Pulp Fiction*), Samuel Gray Anderson (Director, Screenwriter and Producer), and Eugene Suen (Producer). Samuel Gray Anderson and Eugene Suen can accept media interviews.**

This retrospective honours one of the most celebrated and extraordinary filmmakers of our time, Lee Isaac Chung. It was supposed to take place in May, the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, which pays tribute to Asians and Pacific Islanders who have enriched the country's development and history. Yet, due to Hong Kong’s sudden Covid-19 outbreak and the subsequent temporary closure of cinemas, this programme now takes place from July – in a safer place.

Chung’s stories, like the recent happenings of Hong Kong arts programmes and life, are trajectories subject to their time and fate. While Hongkongers and other peoples have been painstakingly coping with the tragedies of the pandemic and other earthshaking events, Chung’s characters exemplify how humans survive the chaotic nature of life – be it personal or communal – in fury, in tension, in dazedness, in tenderness, in humour and in other emotional complexities, along with resilience, versatility and hope.

Our programme title, Cries and Whispers, might recall the masterpiece of the Swedish director Ingmar Bergman. All outstanding filmmakers are primarily great for their primal urge and distinct artistry to carve profound human conditions onto film. In Chung’s oeuvre, concerns are wide-ranging - such as war, illness, discrimination, displacement, loneliness and death. He strives for authenticity in his filmmaking, and his stories are full of cries and whispers from the depths of human psyche. But Chung’s style is gentle and subtle, always allowing space for audiences to observe and evolve with the characters as their journeys ebb and flow. His films are not only about Americans or Asian Americans - they are about human beings - hence their appeal to people far and wide. (For more programme details, please refer to **Appendix 1**)

**About Lee Isaac Chung (Director, screenwriter and producer)**

Lee Isaac Chung’s most recent film *Minari* won an Oscar for [Best Supporting Actress](https://unitedstatesartists.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e846398e9ff487200494064f7&id=b4b2a3e0b3&e=6cc5e0b54c) and was nominated for six Oscars total in 2021, including Best Picture. Chung is a writer and director who grew up in Lincoln, Arkansas, on a small farm in the Ozark Mountains. His first feature film was the Rwandan family drama *Munyurangabo*, which premiered at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival to great acclaim. His oth­er feature films are *Lucky Life*, *Abigail Harm*, and *I Have Seen My Last Born*. (For words from director Lee Isaac Chung, please refer to **Appendix 2**.)

**【Cries and Whispers: Film Retrospective of Lee Isaac Chung】**

**Date:** 29.7 – 6.8.2022

**Venue:** Louis Koo Cinema, Hong Kong Arts Centre (UB, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wanchai)

**Programme Enquiries:** 2582 0282 (10:00 – 18:30 Monday to Friday)

**Co-Presenters:** U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong & Macau, Hong Kong Arts Centre

**Partners:** eslite bookstore, Golden Scene Film Ltd.

**Supporters:** Africa Center Hong Kong, Carbon Brews

**Media Partners:** Asian Movie Pulse, Film Pilgrimage, p-articles

**Event Website:** <https://hkac.org.hk/calendar_detail/?u=wZpNYw7RYzo>

**Download film stills and trailer**: <http://ftp.hkac.org.hk/MDD/Lee_Isaac_Chung>

**YouTube trailer:** <https://youtu.be/otTxZsPuEQM>

**Hong Kong Arts Centre Moving Images**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/hkartscentremovingimages/](http://www.facebook.com/hkartscentremovingimages/)

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/hongkongartscentremovingimages/](http://www.instagram.com/hongkongartscentremovingimages/)

**Ticketing Information**

**Tickets are available now on POPTICKET.hk**

**Website:** <https://www.popticket.hk/event/cries-and-whispers>

**Ticket Prices**

**Screenings** $80 / $64\*

Screening of Munyurangabo and Masterclass $100 / $80\*

All Access Pass (one ticket each for all 5 screenings and the Masterclass with 30% discount, service charge included) - $319

Masterclass Package (one ticket each for *I Have Seen My Last Born*, *Munyurangabo* and *Masterclass*) - $150

\*20% discount for tickets for full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above, and people with disabilities and the minder and Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) recipients. Concessionary ticket holders must produce evidence of their identity or age upon admission.

\*20% discount to HKAC members. Ticket holders must present a valid membership card upon admission.

\*20% discount for each purchase of 4 or more standard tickets.

\*Only one discount offer could be applied to each ticket purchase.

**Hong Kong Arts Centre - Art for Passion, Art for Life, Art for All**

Since 1977, the Hong Kong Arts Centre (HKAC) has been a platform for nurturing and supporting artists, and infusing art into everyday life. Its unique arts and educational programmes aim to make the arts accessible for all.

The HKAC believes in the transformational power of art for people from all walks of life. Established for more than four decades, the HKAC endeavours to bring arts to the people of Hong Kong – by presenting programmes for visual arts, performing arts, moving images and media arts, comics and animation. Our other areas also cover arts education, conferences, festivals, public art and community projects. All with the vision and mission of engaging and inspiring creativity in the Hong Kong community.

In 2000, HKAC founded its education arm, Hong Kong Art School (HKAS). The HKAS provides award-bearing programmes to nurture artists and art practitioners, as well as short enrichment courses for the general public.

The HKAC aspires to engage everyone in the community to become an active participant in the arts - as an enthusiast, an artist or a patron.

In 2023, the HKAC will celebrate its 45th anniversary. Let’s continue to embrace ‘Art for Passion, Art for Life, Art for All’, and share the inspiration.

Official website: [hkac.org.hk](https://hkac.org.hk/) | Facebook: [Hong Kong Arts Centre](https://www.facebook.com/HongKongArtsCentre) | Instagram: [@hongkongartscentre](https://www.instagram.com/hongkongartscentre/)

**Media Enquiry**

**Hong Kong Arts Centre**

* Annie Ho (Marketing & Communications Director) | 2824 5306 / 9481 8706 | Email: aho@hkac.org.hk
* Charis Chau (Marketing & Communications Officer) | 2582 0290 | Email: cchau@hkac.org.hk
* Jacqueline Tong (Project Manager) | 2582 0247 | Email: jtong@hkac.org.hk

**Appendix 1: Programme Details**

|  |
| --- |
| **Cries and Whispers: Film Retrospective of Lee Isaac Chung** |
| **Opening Film: *Minari***  29.07 (Fri) 7:45 PM  **\*Director Lee Isaac Chung will attend the virtual after-screening talk.**  Director: Lee Isaac Chung  Cast: Steven Yeun, Yeri Han, Alan Kim, Noel Kate Cho, Youn Yuh-jung, Will Patton  **Best Supporting Actress, Academy Awards 2021**  **Best Supporting Actress, British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Awards 2021**  **Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award for U.S. Dramatic Competition, Sundance Film Festival 2021**  USA | 2020 | 115 mins | DCP | Colour | In Korean and English with Chinese and English subtitles  *“Minari is truly the best. It grows anywhere, like weeds. So anyone can pick and eat it. Rich or poor, anyone can enjoy it and be healthy.”*  A tender and sweeping story about what roots us, *Minari* follows a Korean-American family that moves to a tiny Arkansas farm in search of their own American Dream in the 1980s. The family home changes completely with the arrival of their sly, foul-mouthed, but incredibly loving grandmother. Amidst the instability and challenges of this new life in the rugged Ozarks, the film shows the undeniable resilience of family and what really makes a home.  *Minari* is a semi-autobiographical take on the upbringing of Lee Isaac Chung. Many critics declared it one of the best films of 2020. The director has cited Fyodor Dostoevsky and Willa Cather as inspirations when he wrote the story. In Chung’s words, the film is about “a family trying to learn how to speak a language of its own. It goes deeper than any American language and any foreign language. It’s a language of the heart.”  ***Lucky Life***  30.07 (Sat) 7:45 PM  **\*Co-writer and producer Mr Samuel Gray Anderson will attend the virtual after-screening talk.**  Director: Lee Isaac Chung  Cast: Daniel O’Keefe, Megan McKenna, Kenyon Adams  **Nominated for Best Narrative Feature, World Narrative Competition, Tribeca Film Festival 2010**  **Nominated for Grand Prix, Bratislava International Film Festival 2010**  USA | 2010 | 97 mins | Digital | Colour | In English with English subtitles  *“Dear waves, what will you do for me this year?*  *Will you drown out my scream?”*  A beach trip from the past lingers in Mark and Karen’s minds as they prepare for the arrival of their newborn. One year, the ritual of a seaside vacation shared by a group of friends becomes a farewell for Jason, who is diagnosed with terminal cancer. Steeped in tenderness and affection, the friends continue their laughter and camaraderie in even the most quotidian activities, and conceal their grief to face the last days of Jason. As memory plays back, the couple embraces another phase of life.    Lee Isaac Chung’s contemplative, understated second feature on companionship, memory, life, and loss is inspired by the poetry of Gerald Stern, whose work lends the film its title. With much of the dialogue absent from the film’s outline, the actors improvise in the scene. The film has been shot in natural light without a storyboard, and Chung describes this spontaneous journey of filmmaking to seem like “an exercise of faith”. Eric Kohn of *IndieWire* praises the director for “his uncanny ability to elevate seemingly minor exchanges to a place of deeper significance”.  ***I Have Seen My Last Born***  31.07 (Sun) 7:45 PM  **\*Co-director Mr Samuel Gray Anderson will attend the virtual after-screening talk.**  Directors: Lee Isaac Chung, Samuel Gray Anderson  Cast: John Kwezi  **Nominated for Best Documentary Feature, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival 2015**  Rwanda, USA | 2015 | 79 mins | Digital | Colour | In Kinyarwanda with English subtitles  *“I thought about what it means to be a true human, and that’s what I chose to be.”*  Lee Isaac Chung and his frequent collaborator, Samuel Gray Anderson, return to Rwanda to co-direct a documentary on 39-year-old Jean Kwezi, who was marked profoundly as a young adult by the 1994 genocide: separated from his family, only re-uniting with them years later, long after they had assumed him dead. The dramatic events of Jean's reunion with his parents and, much later, the daughter that he once abandoned, have already taken place; but his deep emotions remain present. Each moment echoes the continuing power of these events and the vitality with which Jean has emerged from a dark past to live with a new purpose. What is he? How to be a Rwandan? What is Rwanda?  Chung’s only documentary continues to demonstrate the co-directors’ strengths as keen observers – respectful, unassuming and thoughtful*. I Have Seen My Last Born* is a powerful companion to *Munyurangabo*.  ***Abigail Harm***  05.08 (Fri) 8:00 PM  **\*Ms Amanda Plummer (lead actress) and Mr Eugene Suen (producer) will attend the virtual after-screening talk.**  Director: Lee Isaac Chung  Cast: Amanda Plummer, Tetsuo Kuramochi, Will Patton  **Grand Jury Prize for Best Narrative Feature and Special Jury Prize for Best Director, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival 2013**  USA | 2013 | 80 mins | Digital | Colour | In English with English subtitles  *“It has nothing to do with love.”*  Abigail Harm reads books to the blind and lives at the edge of the city, where no one can see her. "You have no idea how it would be if one day you were the only person left in the city,” Abigail whispers to herself. She keeps her eyes turned away, but secretly she watches, listens, and hopes. She remembers an old story about a woodcutter who saves the life of a deer and is granted a wish. The woodcutter wishes for a companion. Before long, this tale seems to come alive as a mysterious man appears in Abigail’s world, and she falls in love with him.    Lee Isaac Chung’s daringly original take of the Korean folktale *The Woodcutter and the Nymph* exudes the air of a surreal urban fairy tale. Multiple Emmy and Tony Award-winning actress, Amanda Plummer, plays the titular heroine. She has starred in numerous films and TV series including Quentin Tarantino’s *Pulp Fiction* as the unforgettable Honey Bunny, and Terry Gilliam’s *The Fisher King*. Violet Lucca of the *Village Voice* praises Plummer’s arresting and emotive performance, which “exudes more emotion in a wistful sideways glance than most actresses do over their entire careers.”  ***Munyurangabo***  06.08 (Sat) 7:45 PM  **\*Masterclass on Film Directing with Lee Isaac Chung will take place right after the screening.**  Director: Lee Isaac Chung  Cast: Cast: Jeff Rutagengwa, Eric Ndorunkundiye  **Grand Jury Prize, AFI Fest 2007**  **Best First Film, Mexico City International Contemporary Film Festival 2008**  Rwanda, USA | 2007 | 97 mins | Digital | Colour | In Kinyarwanda with English subtitles  *“What is your battle?”*  Munyurangabo is orphaned by the Rwandan Genocide and is eager to seek justice for his Tutsi parents. After stealing a machete from a market in Kigali, he and his Hutu friend, Sangwa, leave the Rwandan capital and return to their impoverished village, where Sangwa gets loving care from his family, and Munyurangabo is met with hostility from the family. “Hutus and Tutsis are supposed to be enemies,” Sangwa’s parents balk at this friendship. As the two adolescents confront and reconcile their differences, they also learn to survive the aftermath of the Rwandan Civil War.    This debut of Lee Isaac Chung is also the first narrative feature in the Kinyarwanda language. It started as a project to allow genocide orphans, returned refugees, the undereducated, and those barely making a living who were not film professionals to become Munyurangabo’s cast and crew. In the words of Chung, “[T]his is a film that focuses on memory, a collective one, and it was a quest to discover spiritual elements within memory.” American critic Roger Ebert calls it "in every frame a beautiful and powerful film - a masterpiece."  **Masterclass on Film Directing with Lee Isaac Chung**  **\*Starts right after the screening of *Munyurangabo* in the Louis Koo Cinema, Hong Kong Arts Centre**  Guest: Lee Isaac Chung (Director)  Moderator: Maggie Lee (Film Critic and Curator)  \*Chung and Lee will join the masterclass virtually.  After a screening of his debut feature *Munyurangabo* (festival participation includes Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Rotterdam), Lee Isaac Chung will share his journey of filmmaking with the audience - from starting his career as an independent filmmaker to receiving popular international recognition. Chung has been persistent in his art with an authentic vision and determined efforts. His is more than a story of success, but of a film artist who is brave, sincere and faithful to his medium and his viewers. |

**Appendix 2**

**Lee Isaac Chung: Words from the Director**

I’m honored to screen this program in Hong Kong, which is a second home to me. I married into the city after meeting a Hong Kong girl in university; her urban sophistication held an endless fascination to this farm boy from Arkansas. It’s hard to believe that seventeen years have passed since we said our vows in Tsim Sha Tsui. Over the years, through our regular visits, I have learned that Hong Kong families are big, they are close, and they are kind. My wife’s family is proof. They were patient supporters in my journey to gain a footing as a filmmaker, and they spurred me forward despite how rough around the edges I was. I wouldn’t be here without them.

Nonetheless, when the Hong Kong Arts Centre and the American Consulate invited me to screen a program of my work, I almost declined the invitation. I was incredibly honored, but, I wondered, wasn’t I just getting started? Weren’t my early films awkward teenage photographs I should hide away? Then, I thought of my family in Hong Kong, my mother-in-law and father-in-law in particular, who have embraced and loved me from the start; they have always encouraged me to share my voice. I’m grateful to them, along with the presenters, to be able to do that in this program. Though I regret that I cannot be in Hong Kong due to my production schedule, I am so pleased that we will have virtual conversations together. I hope that this “retrospective” will challenge me to work harder, with the faith that my best years are yet to come. And in the meantime, I will hold the same hope for Hong Kong, this city that I love.