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| **Women Direct. Korean Indies! – Korean Women Independent Film Series**  **Co-Presented by Hong Kong Arts Centre, DMZ International Documentary Film Festival and**  **Seoul Independent Film Festival (19 March to 31 July 2021)**  **APPENDIX** |
| **A Boy and Sungreen**  **Director: Ahn Ju-young**  Nominated for Best New Actor, Grand Bell Awards (South Korea) 2020 Nominated for Best New Actor, Baek Sang Art Awards (South Korea) 2020 Nominated for the KTH Award (for Korean independent films), Busan International Film Festival 2018 Nominated for Independent Star Award, Seoul Independent Film Festival 2018  ***Together we stand and laugh***  **Date & Time**: 19/3/2021 (Fri) 7:30pm\* \*The director will meet the audience via Zoom at the after-screening talk. Conducted in Cantonese or English and Korean.  Moderator: Patrick Suen (Film critic, columnist)  South Korea｜ 2018｜ 99 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  This is an endearing story about two 14-year-old best friends who have been together since birth - sensitive and fragile Bo-hee, and sassy and tough Nok-yang. Bo-hee has been brought up by his single mother, who says his father is dead. Nok-yang’s mother has died in labour, and has been with her grandmother and father since. One day, Bo-hee finds out that his father might actually be alive, so he sets out to find him, when Nok-yang, a cinephile, has the ambition to make her first movie on Bo-hee, “What if this film kicks ass, and I get invited to Cannes?” On the duo’s way of self-discovery, they meet new people, encounter cruel truths and pure affection, and grow up. What does it take to have a sense of belonging and unconditional love?  This debut feature by director Ahn Ju-young has been well-received by international critics and audiences. Her previous work has been nominated for a Blue Dragon Film Award, and has won the King of Comedy Prize at the Mise-en-scène Short Film Festival and the Grand Prize at the Daegu Independent Short Film Festival amongst other prizes.  **Itaewon**  **Director: Kangyu Garam**  Paris Korean Film Festival 2017 Seoul Human Rights Film Festival 2017 Gwangju Human Rights Film Festival 2016  ***Between Korea and America, there are the stories of Itaewon and three women***  **Date & Time:** 20/3/2021 (Sat) 7:30pm\* \*The director will meet the audience via Zoom at the after-screening talk. Conducted in Cantonese or English and Korean.  Moderator: Steve Chung (Assistant Lecturer, Global Studies Programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong)  South Korea | 2016/2019｜ 98 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  In the middle of Seoul lies its epicentre of international cultures and openness, Itaewon, a district that has undergone extreme survivals and transformations from violent assaults and innocent encounters by foreigners over centuries. Three women, Sam-sook, Naki and Young-hwa, recall their angers, sorrows and joys of making a living in Itaewon’s red light street, coined Hooker Hill, since 30 years ago, when US soldiers and dollars from a nearby army base began to overflow the area. Since the base started moving out with clubs shutting down, Itaewon has been gentrified into an exotic neighbourhood for young worldly Koreans and foreign residents. The three aged women continue to fight social stigmas and live with memories that paint different faces of Korea’s postcolonial past, present and future, illustrating the endless possibilities of individual dignity, hope and perseverance.  Director Kangyu Garam co-founded an alternative cultural club called Girls Play Girls. She has won multiple awards from festivals including the DMZ International Documentary Film Festival, the Seoul Independent Documentary Film and Video Festival, and the Busan International Short Film Festival.  **The Strangers**  **Director: Myoung So-hee**  Asian Vision Competition, Taiwan International Documentary Festival 2020  Wide Angle Competition, Busan International Film Festival 2018  Festival Film Dokumenter (Indonesia), 2019  Dhaka International Film Festival, 2020  ***Mother’s past. Daughter’s present.***  **Date & Time:** 16/4/2021 (Fri) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2018｜ 81 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  In autumns, nightmares always creep up on So-hee. Desperate to get rid of the discomfort, she tries a change of scenery and returns to her hometown, Chuncheon, to see her mother, who she has ignored for a long time. So-hee starts recording her mother with a camera, trying to derive answers from questions that have been dormant and vague in the shadow of her mind. She weaves feelings and meanings out of her mother’s recollection of the past while her mother thinks it is better to forget. As So-hee sheds tears of agony for being unable to reconcile with their irresolvable conflicts, she wonders if their relationship is destined to be coloured by hurt and hate.  Director Myoung So-hee started making documentaries by chance and *The Strangers* is her first documentary feature. She is the assistant director of *How to Become a Chair* (2014).  **Escape the Corset**  **Director: Lee Mi-hae**  ***I want to live like myself.***  **Date & Time:** 17/4/2021 (Sat) 4pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2020｜ 60 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  With the aim of liberating women from the rigid standards of beauty and the social pressure to conform, the Escape the Corset movement began in South Korea in 2018. It empowers women to express themselves through their own solidarity. Having short hair and no makeup is a common symbol of the movement. Women began to flood social media with selfies of untouched faces and videos of them smashing makeup and cutting their own hair. It is not a mere matter of taste, but a statement of truth against the establishment. With a focus on hair, this documentary compiles interviews with South Korean women on the pressure that they face, their view on gender stereotypes and how they think the world should move forward.  This is the first documentary of director Lee Mi-hae, who cut her hair short, “If you have the courage to take a step forward, then you cannot fit me into what society demands, so that you can love yourself, and women of the next generations can enjoy a freer world.”  **Lucky Chan-sil**  **Director: Kim Cho-hee**  Best New Actress, Baek Sang Art Awards (South Korea) 2020  KBS Independent Film Award, Busan International Film Festival 2019  Nominated for Best New Director and Best New Actress, Blue Dragon Awards (South Korea) 2020  ***She loves filmmaking, and dreams of Leslie Cheung.***  **Date & Time:** 17/4/2021 (Sat) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2019｜ 96 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  “I gave my life to film. No man, no children... Now I’m broke and losing my mind!" After the sudden death of her long-time director, once busy film producer Chan-sil finds herself jobless and listless, then she rents a room owned by a kind old lady. While quiet frustration and insecurity simmer in her new life, she becomes a cleaner of an actress, and meets a younger man who teaches French. Infatuated with him, she becomes anxious about her middle age, tantalising romance and non-career. Yet, Leslie Cheung is always there for her. Told with arresting honesty and humour, this story celebrates Chan-sil’s remarkable singularity and her quest for a life lived truly.  Writer-director Kim Cho-hee is the producer of ten of renowned director Hong Sang-soo’s films. *Lucky Chan-sil* is her directorial debut. It has participated in several festivals, such as San Francisco International Film Festival and Udine Far East Film Festival, and has been critically acclaimed and awarded. Kim has also made numerous short films that entered many festivals.  **maggie**  **Director: Yi Ok-seop**  CGV Arthouse Award, KBS Independent Film Award, Actress of the Year and Citizen Critics Award, Busan International Film Festival 2019  Grand Prix (Best Picture Award), Osaka Asian Film Festival 2019  Audience Award, Seoul Independent Film Festival 2019  ***We all are falling into a hole of misunderstanding.***  **Date & Time:** 21/5/2021 (Fri) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2018｜ 89 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  As an x-ray slide of a couple having sex is discovered in a hospital, it sparks panic among its staff and patients. The administration is more interested in who the couple is than who has hit the x-ray button. One of the nurses, Yoon-young, is about to resign because she thinks the couple in question might have been her and her boyfriend. Yet, when she arrives in the hospital on the next day, there is no one in the hospital aside from the deputy. When almost each of the hospital staff is paranoid of being suspected, strange and huge sinkholes start to appear in the city. Meanwhile, maggie, the hospital’s pet catfish, is quietly watching all these…  Director Yi Ok-seop has made several short films prior to *maggie*, which is her debut feature. *maggie* has participated in numerous film festivals such as the BFI London Film Festival, Munich International Film Festival and Taipei Film Festival amongst others.  **For Vagina's Sake**  **Director: Kim Bo-ram**  London Korean Film Festival 2018  Berlin Korean Independent Film Festival 2018  ***Menstruation. Womanhood. World affairs.***  **Date & Time:** 22/5/2021 (Sat) 3:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2017｜ 73 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Women bleed once every month, and yes, they remain alive. Many traditions regard menstruation as impurity, inferiority and taboo, but women have been suffering from bleeding and its stigma to give birth and raise families. In 2015, America’s National Public Radio (NPR) named 2015 the Year of the Period. As Korean women become aware of period-related issues that are being overlooked by society, such as destitute women’s helplessness to procure sanitary products in both poor and rich countries, they start to demand their right to choose how to bleed. *For Vagina’s Sake* tells the history of menstruation and shows how societies define women and their rights from cultural, economic and technological perspectives.  Director Kim Bo-ram has been working in story development and has written a documentary feature *Upo, People in Wetland* (2014), which was selected for the Shanghai International TV Festival and Green Film Festival (South Korea).  **Way Back Home**  **Director: Park Sun-joo**  Most Promising Talent Award, Osaka Asian Film Festival 2020  ***It’s lively because of you.***  **Date & Time:** 22/5/2021 (Sat) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2019｜ 114 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  A young married couple, Jeong-won and Sang-u, are about to move into a new home. One day, Jeong-won receives a call from the police. They tell her that the man that has sexually assaulted her ten years ago is now caught, and ask her to testify. Overwhelmed by her painful past and uncertain about whether she should reveal the secret to her husband, their loving and happy marriage is suddenly disturbed by disappointments, suspicion and confusion. As Jeong-won’s old wound bleeds afresh and there are more harsh discoveries, Sang-u goes through her pain with tender resilience and gradual understanding.  Director Park Sun-joo has directed several short films and won Grand Prize for *Mild Fever* (2017) at the Seoul International Women Film Festival. *Way Back Home* is her first fiction feature.  **Microhabitat**  **Director: Jeon Go-woon**  Best New Director, Blue Dragon Awards 2018  Best New Director and Best Screenplay, Grand Bell Awards 2018  Best New Director and Independent Film Support Awards, The Korean Association of Film Critics Awards 2018  CGV Arthouse Award, Busan International Film Festival 2017  Tiger Uncaged Award for Best Feature Film, New York Asian Film Festival 2018  Ingmar Bergman Competition, Göteborg International Film Festival (Sweden) 2018  ***Her whiskey, cigarettes and boyfriend***  **Date & Time:** 26/6/2021 (Sat) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2018｜ 106 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Miso, an impoverished thirty-something former musician, makes a living as a housekeeper. When the government doubles the price of cigarettes, she gives up her house to keep the three things she likes - whiskey, cigarettes and her boyfriend, who is an unsuccessful comics artist. Now homeless, she finds her previous band mates to shelter her, but her friends criticise her for consuming luxuries like cigarettes and whiskey while living in poverty. Miso refuses to compromise and stays the way she likes. The Korean film title literally means “a little princess”.  *Microhabitat* is the debut feature of director Jeon Go-woon and was lauded with awards and a long festival run. Jeon’s previous films also won several awards and participated in many festivals. She co-founded KwangHwaMoon Cinema, an independent collective of filmmakers aimed at helping each other debut in the industry.  **Untold**  **Director: Lee-kil Bora**  Excellence Award, Persons with Disabilities Film Festival (South Korea) 2019  Mecenat Award Special Mention (Wide Angle - Documentary Competition), Busan International Film Festival 2018  ***Give me justice***  **Date & Time:** 27/6/2021 (Sun) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2018/20｜ 79 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  In the 1960s, South Korea fought against the communists as a US ally during the Vietnam War. A lot of atrocities were committed with civilians raped and killed by Koreans. Every February, many Vietnamese pray and offer incense to console the victims on an occasion called Dai Han (Korean) Commemoration. But in South Korea, the history of the massacre is admitted and the Vietnam War is officially documented merely as a contribution to South Korea’s rapid economic growth. As histories are fighting to be heard and justified, Vietnamese survivors travel to Korea to fight for their case.  Lee-Kil Bora dropped out of school at age 16, and travelled in South East Asia for volunteer work. The experience inspired her first documentary and she has been making films since. Her work has participated in the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival and Film Festival for Women's Rights (South Korea) amongst others.  **Selected Shorts to Wow**  **Date & Time:** 30/7/2021 (Fri) 7:30pm\* \* With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  **Movements**  **Director: Jeong Da-hee**  Director’s Fortnight, Cannes Film Festival 2019 Short Films and Taiwanese Short Films Competition, Taichung International Animation Festival 2019  South Korea | 2019｜ 10 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Some baobab trees in Africa grow 0.008mm in ten minutes. The fastest dog in the world, the greyhound, can run 12km. Earth travels 18,000km around the Sun. *Movement* is a 10-minute animated film which the director drew at a rate of two seconds of animation per day. We are all walking, seeing, working, running and stopping simultaneously.  **Unpredictable Boy**  **Director: Goong Yu-jeong**  Asiana International Short Film Festival 2019  South Korea | 2019｜ 31 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Myung-hyun, an elementary school teacher, finds out that one of the students, Chang-jin, has not paid for the after-school classes. When confronted, he tells her that he has left the money on her desk. However, the money is nowhere to be found. Having found out that Chang-jin is from a poor family, Myung-hyun tries to help, but the boy wants something else…  **Beginners' Class**  **Director: Kim Hyun-jung**  South Korea | 2019｜ 50 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Ga-yeong, commuting from a suburb to Seoul for a scriptwriting class, wants to get closer to her classmates.  **The Pregnant Tree and the Goblin**  **Directors: Kim Dong-ryung, Park Kyoung-tae**  International Film Festival Rotterdam 2020  East Asian Experimental Competition (Terayama Shuji Prize), Image Forum Festival (Japan) 2020  Asian Vision Competition, Taiwan International Documentary Festival 2020  Busan International Film Festival 2019  ***Reality. Imagination. Resistance.***  **Date & Time:** 31/7/2021 (Sat) 7:30pm\* \*With after-screening talk. Conducted in English.  South Korea | 2019｜ 115 mins ｜DCP ｜ Colour ｜In Korean with English subtitles  Park In-sun has become an orphan during the Korean War, and has been sold as a prostitute for the US soldiers. She has been living in a village next to the US military base for more than 40 years. Never given the chance to learn how to read and write, In-sun has been drawing pictures on waste paper all her life, chronicling her painful and mysterious world of traumas. On a winter night, she finds out that her colleague has passed away and follows her silent funeral. The Death Messengers show up and spot In-sun. When they make up stories for their targets to lead them to afterlife, In-sun refuses to give in and creates her own story. The desire of fiction resides in resistance, and not staying as a victim.  Co-directors Kim Dong-ryung and Park Kyoung-tae have been making shorts and documentaries on the US Military Camp Town since the 2000s. Their previous film*, Tour of Duty*, won Special Prize at the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival and Best Independent Film at the Korean Association of Film Critics Awards. |