

Film Archive's "Archival Gems" series to showcase spectacular changes in 1970s Hong Kong films (with photos)

The Hong Kong Film Archive of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department will present its "Archival Gems" series with the theme of "Time After Time IV – The 'Times' and 'Trends' of 1970s Hong Kong Film" on the first Sunday of February and March next year, featuring four Hong Kong films that reflect the many facets of urban life and styles in the 1970s.

As socio-economic developments accelerated in the 1970s, Hong Kong cinema entered a phase of transitioning from the old to the new. Besides reflecting the daily lives of people, many Hong Kong films of the time also sought to provide sensory stimulation for audiences. This screening programme comprises of two sections, namely "A Comedic Look on Life" and "Fists and Eros". The former features comedies satirising social phenomena, while the latter showcases the trend of 1970s films featuring martial arts action and erotica to attract viewers.

The two films under the "A Comedic Look on Life" section include "A Strange Tale of the Strange People" (1979) and "Money Trip" (1979). The former starred a fledgling Ng Kong as a simple-minded youth who becomes a temporary martial arts actor with his agility, encountering a series of thrilling and humorous moments. This social satire comedy paints a vivid and riveting picture of urban life through the absurd encounters of ordinary people.

The other film, "Money Trip", marks the first collaboration between George Lam and Cora Miao on the big screen. In the film, the two, together with fortune seekers, embark on a crazy treasure hunt for a valuable fossil. Lau Tin-chi's script is full of the situation-comedy style of 1970s television dramas, and is rife with imaginative and whimsical elements. The film also features well-known actors Ng Mang-tat and Kent Cheng.

"The Heroine" (1973), part of the "Fists and Eros" section, is an action-filled crime film about the crackdown on a drug-dealing gang. Jackie Chan plays a villain in the film. Also serving as the film's martial arts choreographer, he performed numerous exciting action scenes with a policewoman played by Yuen Chau, his fellow apprentice under the same master.

"Underworld Beauty" (also known as "From the Underworld") (1974) tells the story of a female ghost, played by Tien Ni, who uses beauty and magic power to lure a coffin shop owner into saving the lives of evildoers. The coffin shop owner later realises that all the people he has saved live on to wreak more havoc, so he decides to follow his conscience and refuse to work with the ghost anymore. The film combines spirituality, comedy and human desire, offering not only entertainment but also an exploration of themes

such as life and karma in a simple and straightforward manner.

"A Strange Tale of the Strange People" and "Money Trip", to be screened on February 2, are both in Cantonese, while "The Heroine" and "Underworld Beauty", to be screened on March 2, are both in Mandarin. All films are with Chinese and English subtitles.

"Money Trip" and "Underworld Beauty" will be accompanied by post-screening talks. The former will be hosted by Sam Ho and Joyce Yang, and the latter will be hosted by Dr Kenny Ng and Grace Ng.

Tickets priced at \$70 will be available at URB TIX (www.urbtix.hk) from January 3 (Friday). A 20 per cent discount will be available for every purchase of regular-priced tickets of two screenings of this programme on the same day. The discounted ticket price will be \$56 each. For telephone bookings, please call 3166 1288. For programme details, please visit the HKFA website (<https://www.filmarchive.gov.hk/en/web/hkfa/2024/tat4/pe-event-2024-tat4.html>) or call 2739 2139.

