

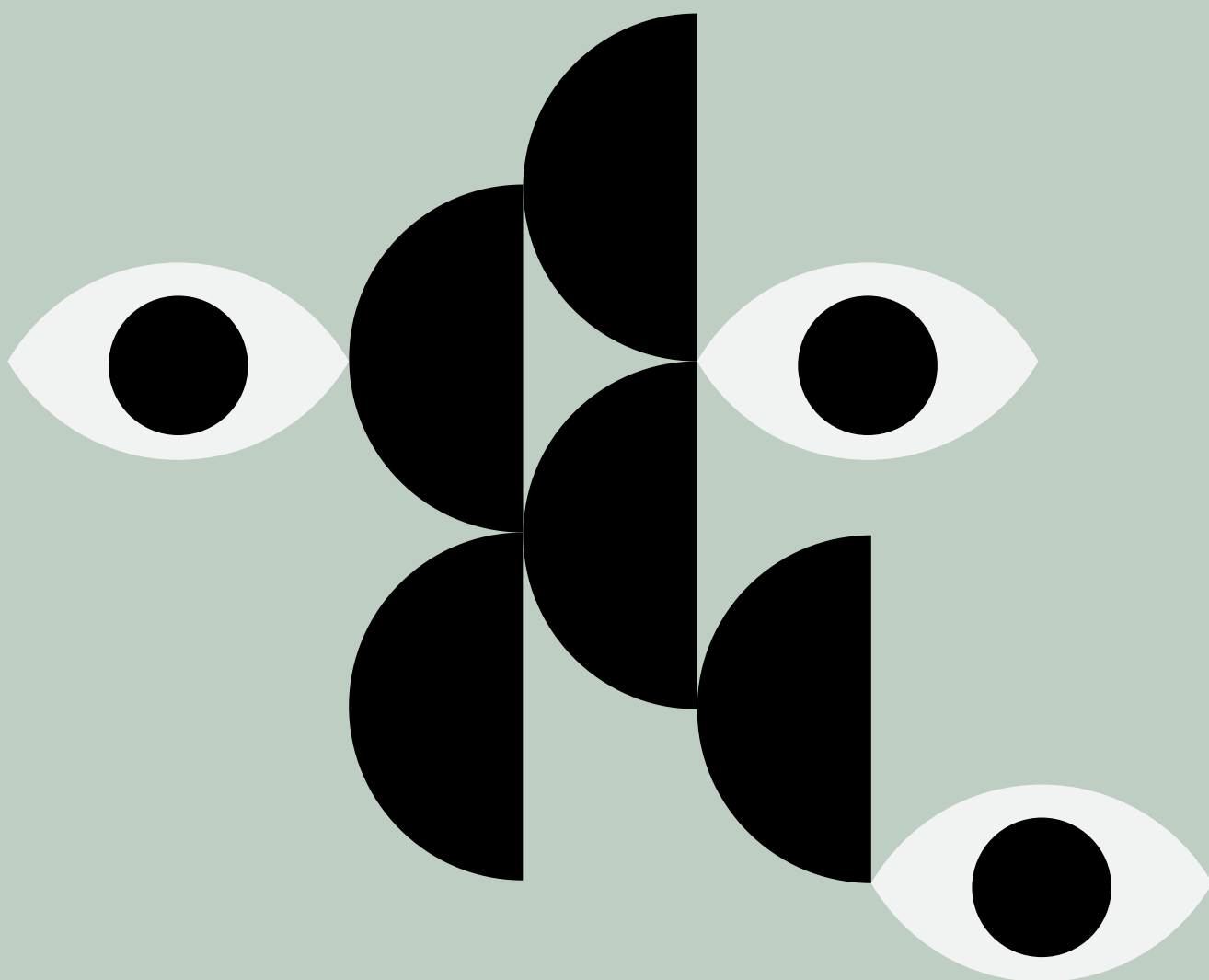
# Festival as a Form of Education



Asian  
Cinema  
Education

A Collection of Festival Educational Practices,  
Resources, and Inspirations

Published: Dec 2021



compiled by:

**FIVĚ FLÁVĚURS**  
asian film festival

**CAMERA  
JAPAN  
FESTIVAL**  
2020-2021

**HELSINKI  
CINE  
AASIA**

**FAR EAST  
FILM  
FESTIVAL**  
Udine, Italy

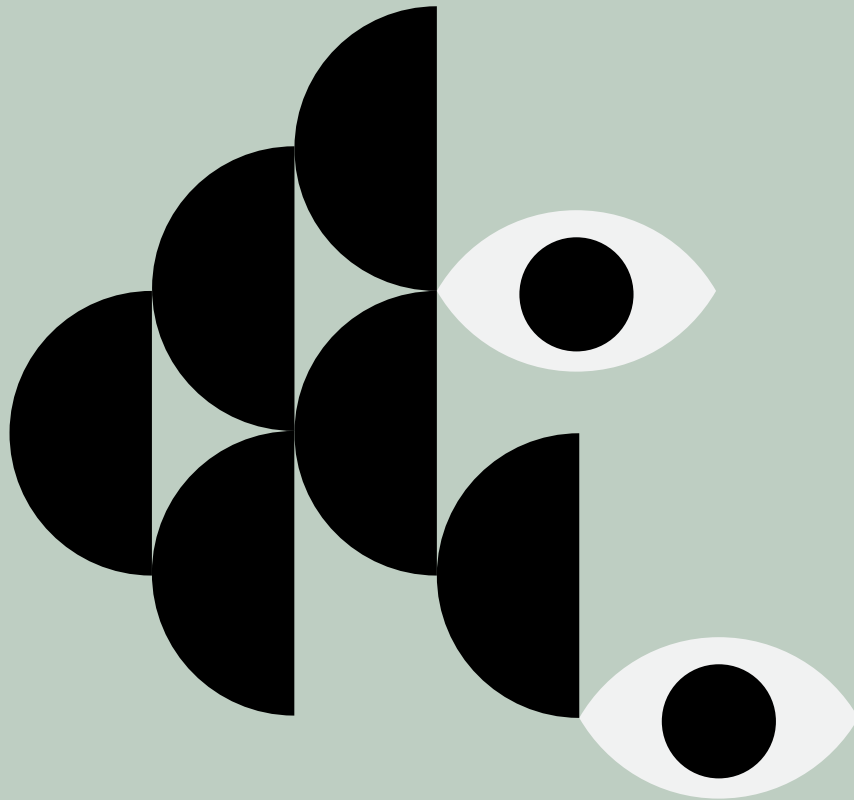
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With the support of the  
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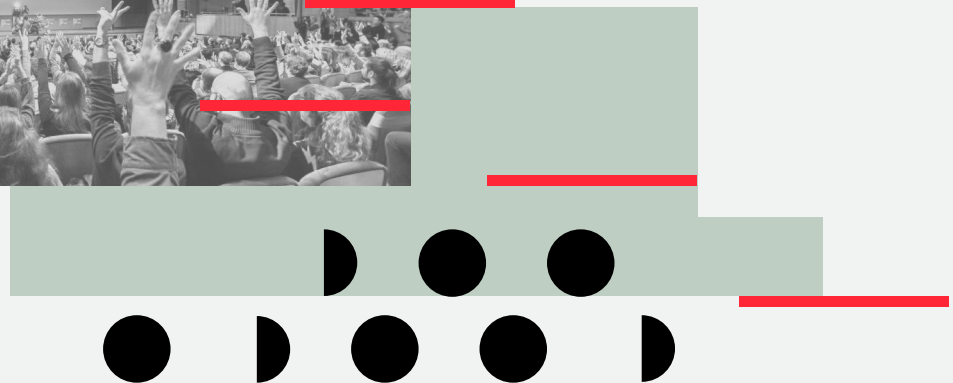
# Introduction

This report was created by four Asian film festivals taking place in Europe: Five Flavours Asian Film Festival, Udine Far East Film Festival, CAMERA JAPAN Festival, and Helsinki Cine Aasia. Each of them is well-established in the world of film events, and has extensive organizational experience when it comes to arranging film screenings.

In the publication, we share tried-and-tested ideas, as well as suggest what to improve to make the event more interesting. All this is done to increase the chances of the audience coming back next year. We present organizational models for particular events and educational activities that each of the described events has developed. We also present ideas for film meetings about Asian cinema, suggest topics for discussions, and workshops. The report also contains portraits of selected institutions that are engaged in model educational and cultural activities aimed to spread the richness of Asian culture around the world.

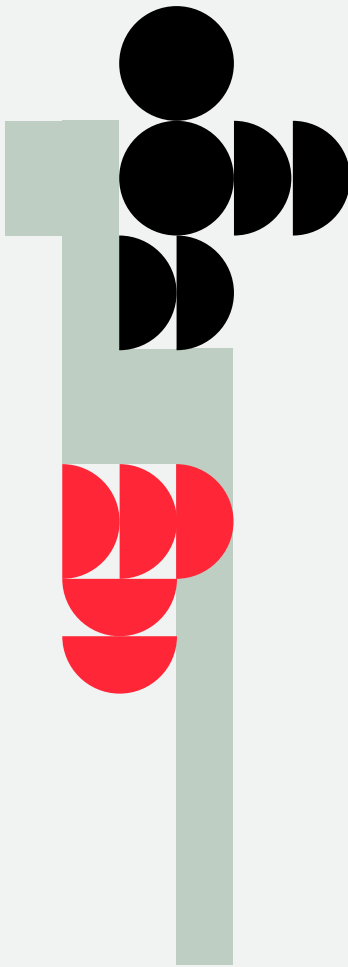
We hope that this publication will inspire and encourage you to try to organize a film event, and that the tips it contains will help you create an attractive, professional event that will satisfy your audience.

# What is a Film Festival?



A festival is a complex event that usually consists of film screenings, performances, or concerts, as well as meetings, lectures, shows, workshops, or talks. While presenting music or films, the festival becomes a pretext for various educational practices, in which a wide audience willingly and spontaneously participates. The festival provides educational opportunities on many levels, allowing people to broaden their horizons, acquire practical and specialistic skills, general and industry-specific knowledge, as well as gain professional experience.

The focus of festivals involved in this project is not only to create a gripping film program but also to infect audiences with a passion for Asian cinema by creating an appealing educational offer. Thanks to the debates, workshops, and lectures held at the festivals, the viewers gain new skills and widen their knowledge of cinema and other cultures. The educational activities accompanying the festivals are incidental in nature, but their informality, openness, and lack of registration are a source of great value. They give the viewers a chance to participate casually, without obligations or consequences. The spontaneous participation often turns into a passion, which leads to a desire to investigate film themes, and learn about the culture and sociopolitical situation in Asian countries.



# Organizational Schemes of Film Festivals

There are many different models for organizing film festivals - depending on time and funding opportunities. Most festivals start as small events and grow over the years, increasing their number of film screenings, accompanying events, partners and collaborators. Below are the organizational models of the festivals involved in the Asian Cinema Education project:

## Five Flavours Asian Film Festival (founded in 2006)

Five Flavours is organized by Arteria Art Foundation. The festival takes place in two Warsaw-based cinemas. It is also available online for audiences from all over Poland. It employs four people working full-time for the whole year. A few people, such as graphic designers or social media specialists, work part-time. For the duration of the festival, the team increases to around 30 people and 60 volunteers. Throughout the year, the festival team organizes smaller film reviews and deals with small-scale distribution activities. The event is supported by Warsaw City Council, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Create HK, and HK Film Development Fund, the Ministry of Culture, Taiwan, Taipei Representative Office in the Federal Republic of Germany, the Taipei Representative Office in Poland, and Japan Foundation.

## Udine Far East Film Festival (founded in 1999)

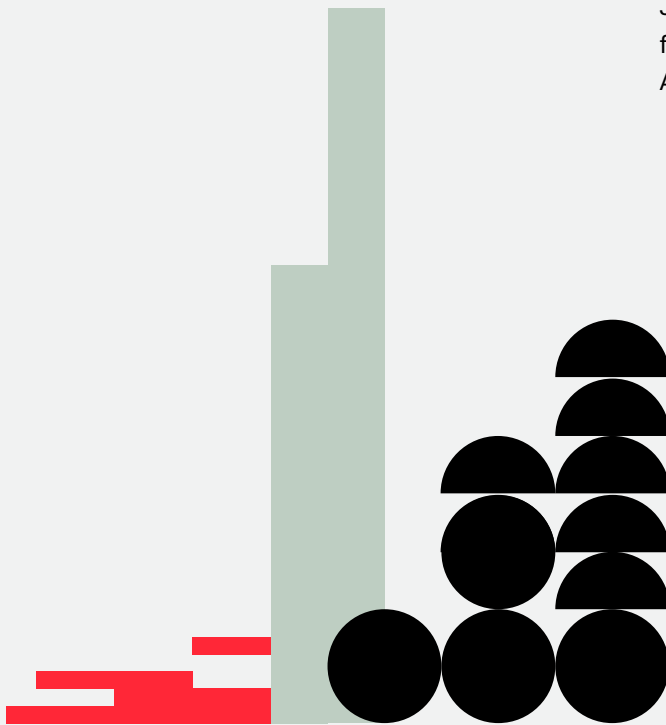
Udine Far East Film Festival is organized by the cultural association Centro Espressioni Cinematografiche (which has 15 employees and manages two theatres in the city). It is supported by the Ministry of Culture, the Regional Authority of Friuli Venezia Giulia, and the City of Udine. The festival also receives support and sponsorships from private organizations and foreign film promotion bodies. The festival has a staff of around 200 people, including most employees of C.E.C. and around 100 volunteers.

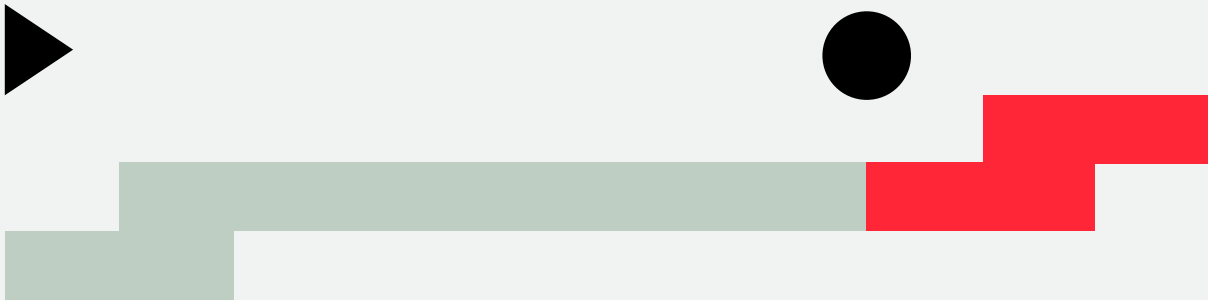
## CAMERA JAPAN Festival (founded in 2005)

CAMERA JAPAN Festival is organized by Stichting Tamago. It is run by a team of around 14 volunteers, under the guidance of the festival director, the financial director, and the head of PR. The team is also assisted by about 50 volunteers. The festival is supported by Rotterdam festivals, The Dutch Film Fonds, the Isaac Alfred Ailion Foundation and the Japan Foundation. Next to that, smaller and local funds, such as the Stichting Bevordering van Volkskracht support, participate in supporting the festival. Over the rest of the year, Stichting Tamago organises other film screenings and events with different partners.

## Helsinki Cine Aasia (founded in 2011)

Helsinki Cine Aasia Asian film festival is organized yearly by registered NPO Elokuviin Aasia ry. (Cinematic Association of Asia). The festival has no full-time, year-round staff, and the four central organizers work part-time for the festival. Before the festival, volunteers are added to the staff and contracts vary from a graphic designer to technical assistant. The festival is supported by the Helsinki City Culture Office, Arts Promotion Center TAIKE, Japan Foundation, and commercial sponsorship. Aside from the main festival, Helsinki Cine Aasia co-produces Asian film events together with other partners.





# How to Organize a Film Event?

Film events come in many shapes and forms. They can range from one single screening to hundreds of screenings with extensive programmes that include talks, lectures, and workshops. There is no one right way to go about organizing a film event, which is why we would like to present a couple of them. Several factors should be kept in mind – what it comes down to is the what, the where, and the how.

There can be a considerable overlap between the steps. A decision taken at one step will probably impact the other steps as well. If the idea for the event of organizing is similar to an already existing one, consider approaching the other event's organizers to talk about a possible collaboration. The downside of this is not having full autonomy over your ideas and project. However, you will probably benefit from the knowledge and expertise, and possibly the funding of the other organization.

It is certainly possible to create an event without any prior knowledge, but working at an event organization can provide experience helpful in putting your own event together.

Let's start with the "what". First, write down what you want to achieve (the concept and the different components, and how these fit that concept). This should be done

for your own benefit, but also to help explain your plans to others. Next, identify the reasons why this particular event and the (potential) target audience. This document could serve as the basis for approaching potential partners.

Think of the number of films/screenings planned. In addition to that, consider the following: What accompanying programme (if any) would you like to have? Any special events? Are you planning on-site or online events (or both)? Is it going to be an indoor or outdoor event (and to what extent)? Who do you want to involve (either as part of the organization, hosting part of the programme, or as a partner of the festival)?

In the "where," think about the location, including the digital part of the event if it is a part of the plan. Especially for new festivals, it can be very convenient to organize the whole event at one location. This will make it easier to arrange production, and will ensure that the audience is not

dispersed over several locations. Having a location that can serve as the centre of the festival can also help with the festival's identity.

There are some questions to consider when looking around for a venue: Is it technically possible to do what you are planning to do? Does the venue have experience in organizing similar events? Is it conveniently located and easily accessible? And, just as important, is it affordable? A venue that has some affinity with the event will probably be easier to work with.

With the “where” comes also the subject of laws and regulations. What is possible at one venue might not be legal at another. When thinking of when to hold the event, consider both the regular and the cultural calendar. Organizing an outdoor event in the dead of winter is probably not the best idea (unless it is part of the concept, of course). Consider school and public holidays, major events (football tournaments often have a negative impact on the turnout). Check the cultural calendar to see if there are any events that appeal to a similar audience. Sometimes it is wise to avoid

scheduling at the same time as other events, so as not to compete for the same audience or press attention. On the other hand, sometimes lining up with another event can expand the potential audience and press exposure.

The “how” popped up several times already in the previous steps. Probably the first question is, how to finance the event. But before that, think about the legal entity or structure you need to have. Some organizations prefer to collaborate only with legal entities, and it might help in limiting your (financial) liability. If the goal is to finance the event solely through box office returns, then please keep in mind that you will have to advance the funds yourself. Usually it is necessary to look for additional funding, such as public

and private funds, sponsors, and crowd-funding. Try to keep in mind what interests others might have in supporting the event financially. Public and private funds usually have their missions stated on their website. And in case they don't, they can often be easily reached to obtain more information. Even if their mission statement is featured on their website, it probably would help to try to talk to them to see if and how they could potentially help.

Getting sponsors for the event can be quite challenging, as they will usually expect something in return. Often this is to do with promotion (they would expect you to advertise their business), but it can, for example, also be free tickets to give away to

their clients. Sponsoring can also be an option, meaning they get promotion in return for providing goods or services for free or at a discount.

Crowdfunding for first-time events might also be challenging, unless you have access to a big network of people, or have something interesting enough to offer. Please keep in mind that offering something in return for the support will cost money and time.





No one is capable of doing everything by themselves. Thus, depending on the size of the event, a team is necessary to share the workload and responsibilities. Some make their living organizing events, but many do this for little or no financial compensation, especially when the event is just taking off. If there is sufficient financial resources to have several people on the payroll, then it is possible to work in a small team where everyone will likely have several tasks. In case there aren't enough resources to pay the organizers, the team will probably need to be much bigger, with tasks assigned to one or two individuals who need to do them on top of their paid jobs or assignments.

Programming might be considered the most fun part of the festival, but is quite time-consuming. It can take time to find films that would fit the event. Finding out who holds the rights to the movies you want can be a challenge, and distributors might not always be easy to approach. Then there are screening fees and other conditions to consider. But finalizing the programme and seeing it all come together is definitely a very exciting and satisfying moment.

Having a great programme is one thing, but this success is one that needs to be shared. The audience can be reached in different ways, depending on the event. Use your own channels with printed (posters, flyers, brochures) and online publicity (website, social media, newsletter). Outside channel, such as approaching the press and paid advertising in printed or social media, can also be used. Press releases need to be sent to printed and online media channels at the right time. Institutions, which might be willing to share information about your event among their employees, students and associates, also need to be contacted. Do not be afraid to promote the event among your friends and family, and ask them to promote it as well.

Once the programme is ready to be promoted, think of what needs to be done in order to make it all happen. Everything that happens before, during, and after the festival is often called the production. Start by preparing a schedule/overview of what needs to happen, as well as the what, where and when that is required for this. This includes getting the films to the venue and having them tested, venue decora-

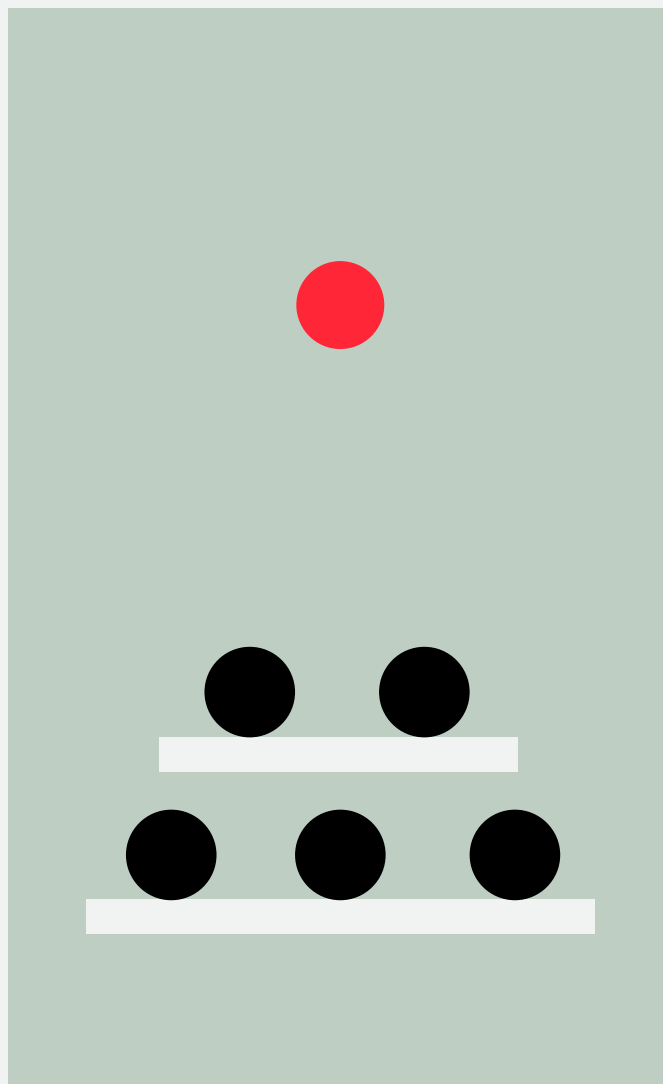
tion, checking what technical support is needed and who will provide it, transporting goods, guests, and catering.

Be as detailed as possible and think of potential backup options. In the worst-case scenario, poor preparation can lead to having to cancel (elements of) your event, which is always a shame. Bad preparation and having to arrange things at the last minute does not enhance your team's festival experience.

During the festival, some extra help will come in handy. Ask friends and family to help out, or put out a call for volunteers. Make an estimate on how many volunteers you need and for what (based on your production schedule/overview).

Tasks need to be clearly described and should not be overly complicated. Since there is often not too much time for lengthy instructions. Make sure the volunteers feel welcome and that they also have a go-to person if they have questions or issues.

# Educational Activities Around Film Festivals



Each festival involved in the Asian Cinema Education project hosts several educational opportunities for its guests. Some of them are direct activities (such as workshops or lectures) others educate through organizing discussions around important social issues and the festival's programme, which provides insight into the contemporary reality of Asian countries.

Below is a brief description of each festival and its educational aspects.



# Five Flavours Asian Film Festival

Five Flavours is a film festival presenting cinema from East and Southeast Asia, and providing an opportunity to discover Asian culture, discuss art, politics and challenges of the contemporary world. The screenings are accompanied by in-depth discussions, lectures and meetings with filmmakers, which aim to present the contemporary face of various Asian cultures in the broadest manner possible. Five Flavours is also a VOD platform, operating in the rhythm of cyclical programs, which enables access to Asian cinema for people from all over Poland. Film screenings are considered an educational tool, broadening horizons, building intercultural dialogue and raising awareness of the problems of the contemporary world.

[www.piecsmakow.pl](http://www.piecsmakow.pl)

## Educational Activities Offered by Five Flavours Asian Film Festival

### Podcasts

The podcast moderated by the organizers of the Five Flavours Asian Film Festival is a space for discussing the latest events in the rich and extremely diverse world of Asian cinema.

It is open to all sources of information about Asian cinema, with episodes lasting 30-40 minutes and published once every two weeks. The episodes take the form of a conversation between two programmers, occasionally with the participation of special guests. The podcasts are published on the festival website, as well as platforms such as Youtube, Spotify, iTunes, and Google Podcasts. The episodes are archived and constitute a permanently available source of knowledge about Asian cinema.

Among the contents discussed are (among others) Polish premieres of Asian films in cinemas / on streaming platforms / at festivals, commentary on current events, trivia and behind-the-scenes news from the Asian film world, film recommendations and analyses (also related to travels to Asia), presentations of national classics and achievements of individual filmmakers, as well as discussions on trends and phenomena related to the film industry in Asia.

### People's Jury

People's Jury is one of the flagship projects of the Five Flavours Film Festival, in which it is not the industry specialists, but passionate and energetic amateurs who evaluate the competition films and decide which of the Festival titles will be awarded the Grand Prix. This formula has worked well for years, creating a unique link between the audience and the organizers.

The members of the Jury participate in practical and theoretical workshops, which help them broaden their film and editorial knowledge and skills – and perhaps also find their career path in the world of film criticism. Thanks to the workshops conducted by active film critics and Asian cinema researchers, the participants are prepared to cooperate with film festivals.

During the festival, the members of the Jury watch all the competition films (usually two titles a day). They then discuss them and participate in lectures on film analysis or selected issues related to the cinema of Southeast Asia, as well as in meetings with festival guests – the filmmakers.

In total, participation in the Jury consists of about 50 hours of practical film studies, from critical viewing, through reviewing films, to a specially selected programme consisting of lectures and additional activities.

### Programme

Films presented in the Five Flavours lineup are unique proposals, not available in the Polish cinema distribution or at other local festivals. The sections are composed based on curatorial proposals, supported by an in-depth recognition of cultural contexts, local film traditions and contemporary socio-political realities. The selection of films includes amateur, avant-garde, as well as popular cinema of significant artistic value and commercial genre productions. The main selection criteria are both aesthetic and cognitive values: films included in the programme are formally innovative and provide an insight into the contemporary reality of their countries of origin.

### Asian Academy

Asian Academy is a series of meetings and lectures broadening the context of the films presented at the festival and the themes they explore. It is an opportunity for the audience to learn about socio-cultural issues, aesthetic traditions, and relations between cinema, everyday life, and current events in Asia.

Specialists (cultural anthropologists, orientalists, publicists, art historians, and cultural researchers), but also representatives of cooperating institutions or media patrons, are invited to participate. The subject matter of the meetings correlates with the film programme. All debates take place in the festival venues, between the screenings.

There is also a lecture in the form of a masterclass, realized in cooperation with the Asian Film Awards Academy. The masterclass is a unique opportunity to dive deeper into the body of work of the invited artist who talks about their

biggest achievements, shares experiences from years of work in the film industry, and presents the particular characteristics of their films and the realities behind their creation. Such a meeting is additionally enriched by presenting previously prepared film fragments.

### Introductions and Q&As

All films presented at the festival are preceded by a professional introduction or commentary prepared by an expert who outlines the cultural context of the film to the audience. After the screenings, there are also question-and-answer sessions involving the audience and the filmmakers, which allow for a better understanding of the film and the circumstances that led to its creation. The meetings are conducted by a moderator, a specialist in cinema, and translated into Polish.

### Books and Publications

The Five Flavours Asian Film Festival can take credit for pioneering film books. "Silent Explosion. New Cinema of East and Southeast Asia," consisting of specialist texts written by experts studying contemporary Asian cinema, was published in 2016. In 2019, it was followed by the monograph "Made in Hong Kong. Cinema of the Time of Change," presenting the achievements of the last three decades of the Hong Kong film industry in essays by Polish and international film experts. The publications aim to present the achievements of the most important Asian filmmakers, and the phenomena and tendencies not yet described in detail in the curriculum of film studies in Poland, which have significantly contributed to the development of world cinema. It is lasting research, involving substantive work and knowledge of experts working on the festival programme. The publications are a unique and valuable addition to the film literature and educational material that helps critics and journalists who research contemporary Asia. It is, at the same time, an encouragement to explore Asian cultures from a non-tourist perspective.



# Udine Far East Film Festival

First opening its doors in Udine on the 10th of April 1999 and going on to become the main European outpost for Asian cinema, the Far East Film Festival has always been home to authentic legends like Jackie Chan and Joe Hisaishi, cult directors like Johnnie To and Takashi Miike, and other notable personas. Inclusive and pop-culture-centric, the FEFF doesn't end after the nine days of the festival but continues throughout the year with film and TV distribution, home video, and even streaming using the Fareastream digital platform.

[www.fareastfilm.com](http://www.fareastfilm.com)

## Educational Activities Connected with Udine Far East Film Festival

Since the 1990s, the C.E.C. (Centro Espressioni Cinematografiche) has been working in the area of Film Literacy, organizing activities targeted at schools, as well as older audiences. This activity has been further expanded with the opening of a Mediatheque in 2009, which holds and lends around 15.000 DVDs and Blurays, as well as 5.000 books and magazines. In the last few years, it organized 20 activities with schools, around 50 activities targeted to a wider audience at the "Visionario" (a five-screens movie theater managed by the C.E.C.), and 50 special morning screenings for students every year.

**The Far East Film Festival hosts three specific educational activities:**

### Ties That Bind

Ties That Bind is a workshop launched in 2008 and designed to assist ten producers from Asia and Europe with potential European-Asian co-production projects. Organized together with EAVE, it started with the collaboration of the Busan International Film Festival and, from 2015, is realized in partnership with SAAVA (Southeast Asian Audio-Visual Association), founder of the Southeast Asian Film Financing Forum (SAFF) in Singapore. It is managed by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Audiovisual Fund, with funds from Creative Europe - MEDIA sub-programme of the European Union.

### Focus Asia

Focus Asia was launched in 2016 and is a project market dedicated to genre projects with strong co-production or co-financing potential for Asia or Europe. The programme includes one-to-one meetings, series of panel discussions, and case studies on development strategies and genre film financing and distribution.

In its last edition, Focus Asia counted the participation of 20 international professionals from over 30 countries – among which there were 40 producers, 20 buyers, 20 sales

agents, 20 festival directors and programmers, as well as some industry representatives.

### FEFF Campus

FEFF Campus is an educational project started in 2013, dedicated to ten young (under 26) Asian and European aspiring journalists. The participants are an active part of the programme that includes seminars, interviews, and workshops that centre around the art of writing and cinema. These are conducted under the supervision of a group of professionals led by veteran journalist Mathew Scott.

The idea is to allow participants (who are not expected to have a formal education in the field) to learn how a film festival works and how to illustrate it, how to write about cinema and interview special guests – all while understanding the strategies to assert oneself in the current media world. It is a unique experience that brings both the traditional media and the newer social media to the attention of the students in a real newsroom setting.

### The Festival also hosts educational activities aimed at schools:

During each edition of the festival, students from secondary schools in Udine are invited to participate in screenings of films suitable for their age and training. In some cases, a subsequent meeting is held with Asian film experts and Festival consultants.

Wherever possible, a link is established between the study address and the proposed film. For example, for a professional institute, the proposal of the documentary "Ramen Heads" was formulated with the subsequent tasting of ramen in a temporary quality restaurant set up at the Visionario cinema.

Also, workshops on audio-visual production have been organised. For instance, in 2018 a workshop took place in the months preceding the festival. It was a series of lessons dedicated to the design and writing of the audiovisual products. During the festival, this was then made and edited by the students, under the supervision of filmmaker Gabriele Fuso. Overall, the workshop involved about 40 hours of teaching plus filming hours.

### FEFF Talks

Festival guests meet the public during the FEFF Talks. These meetings are moderated by the Festival's consultants and translated into Italian and English. They are usually held in the morning and are an opportunity not only for question and answer sessions on the guests' films, but also to learn more about the films of the countries involved in the Festival.

### Kirjoja

From the very first edition, the Festival has added one or more retrospectives to its selection of new films. Since 2004, the retrospective has been accompanied by a bilingual book (Italian/English) edited by one of the Festival's consultants. Twelve books have been produced so far:

- Tim Youngs (editor), *Black Roses and Sentimental Swordsmen: The Cinema of Chor Yuen*, 2004;
- Mark Schilling (editor), *No Borders, No Limits: The World of Nikkatsu Action*, 2005;
- Roger Garcia (editor), *Asia Sings! A Survey of Asian Musical Films*, 2006;
- Alberto Pezzotta (editor), *Patrick Tam: From the Heart of the New Wave*, 2007;
- Sabrina Baracetti, Thomas Bertacche, Giorgio Placereani (editors), *Far East: Ten Years of Cinema (1999-2008)*, 2008,
- Tim Youngs (editor), *Hong Kong Stories: The Tv Works of Ann Hui*, 2009;
- Mark Schilling (editor), *Nudes! Guns! Ghosts! The Sensational Films of Shintoho*, 2010;
- Roger Garcia (editor), *Asia Laughs! A Survey of Asian Comedy Films*, 2011;
- Darcy Paquet (editor), *The Darkest Decade: Korean Filmmakers in the 1970s*, 2012;

- Roger Garcia (editor), *King Hu: In His Own Words*, 2013;
- Mark Schilling (editor), *Beyond Godzilla: Alternative Futures and Fantasies in Japanese Cinema*, 2016;
- Darcy Paquet (editor) *I Choose Evil – Lawbreakers Under the Military Dictatorship*, 2019.



# CAMERA JAPAN Festival

CAMERA JAPAN is a Japanese cultural festival organized in Rotterdam every year since 2006. The main focus is on film, but it also explores visual arts, music, dance, fashion, architecture, food, and much more. Every autumn, the festival takes a selection of films from the programme to Amsterdam for a weekend of screening the best, the weirdest, and the most unexpected cinema from Japan.

[www.camerajapan.nl](http://www.camerajapan.nl)

## Educational Aspects of the Festival

### Film Selection

The festival organizers aim for the selection to be as diverse as possible, so as to give the audience a good idea of what is happening in (contemporary) Japanese Cinema. In terms of theme and style, the diversity is enormous and the only thing they have in common is their origin (mainly made in Japan) and the language spoken (Japanese). Yet many Japanese films also tell the audience something about certain aspects of the Japanese culture and the interests of the Japanese population.



This variety of creativity and diversity that the Japanese cinema has to offer is not very visible outside of Japan. CAMERA JAPAN wants to change that in the Netherlands. At the same time, this diverse range offers an opportunity to serve very different target groups.

### **Introductions and Q&As**

Films must be put into the right social and cultural context, so the viewer can understand why they were selected. All films get a short introduction by one of the programmers, but some will get a longer one. These focus on a specific aspect of the film, such as its production, social context, and cultural setting. Films are carefully selected, and the introduction is done by experts on the subject.

After the screenings, when the filmmakers are present, question-and-answer sessions involving the audience and the filmmakers are organized. These give not only an insight into the production process, but also the motivation of the filmmakers, and can shed light on reception in Japan vs the Netherlands.

During the year, programmers work together with several movie theatres to provide (longer) introductions to Japanese films that are released in the Netherlands or as part of special events.

### **Lectures**

To highlight certain aspects of Japanese culture, lectures are organised during the festival. These can be standalone lectures, however are mostly accompanied by a film that elaborates on the same subject. Lectures are given by professionals that are associated with universities or with a profound experience in the field. However, the nature of the lecture is rather informative than academic. Combined with the fact that the lectures are free or accompanied by screenings, they are accessible for a wide audience.

### **Kids' Day**

A recurring part of the festival is Kids' Day, which focuses on young children and their parents. Through games, workshops and short films, the audience comes into

contact with Japanese culture. For many, it might be the first close encounter with another culture, and the fact that they participate in this with their parents widens the horizon of the entire family.

### **Youth Jury**

In 2019, CAMERA JAPAN had its first Youth Jury. Seven Jury members from different backgrounds watched six movies from the programme together and picked a winner. To help them reach a decision, the festival organized masterclasses on film analysis and Japanese film and culture. They also had a chance to meet filmmakers and get a look at the "behind the scenes" of the festival.

### **Workshops & Interventions/Performances**

Several workshops relating to different aspects of Japanese culture (calligraphy, cooking, and tea tastings) are held during the event. These workshops are mostly given by people with a Japanese background or with proper training/links to Japan.

The foyer of the festival venue is a place for so-called interventions: short performances or demonstrations of different types of Japanese culture, such as music, dance, theatre or martial arts. These are held at times when the foyer is busy with people going to or coming from a film, thanks to which there is a big audience. The idea is to spark people's interest in the cultural form that they might not have considered otherwise.





# Helsinki Cine Aasia

Helsinki Cine Aasia, established in 2012 by four women who all have studied in Asia and mastered at least one Asian language, aims to present contemporary East Asian and Southeast Asian Cinema to Finnish audiences. The festival wants to widen the concept of Asian cinema in Finland by representing new filmmakers, new styles of filmmaking, and new topics in film. Its goal is also to show the variety and vibrancy of current filmmaking in the region. The festival focuses on feature-length fiction, but also documentaries, short films, and animations are included in the program. The film program is enriched by guest filmmaker talks and discussion events with specialists, which aim to highlight the social, political, historical, and aesthetic qualities of particular films. Festival accompanying events include live Asian dance performances and an Asian music club evening.

[www.helsinkicineaasia.fi](http://www.helsinkicineaasia.fi)

## Educational Aspects of the Festival

### Programming

Each year HCA aims to select the most innovative films from East and Southeast Asian countries, with a focus on new rising directors, and introducing filmmaking trends and different types of genres.

In this sense, the festival aims to educate Finnish audiences about the latest filmmaking trends in these regions through its programming policy. As our programming is based on direct contacts and visits to Asia, it is more indicative of current Asian filmmaking than festivals that mostly select their Asian films based on what they see in Cannes or Berlinale.

Another aim is to shed light on contemporary, historical and social issues depicted in the films' stories, and hence enhance the understanding of Asia in Finland. Our programming policy aims to promote difference and variety in filmmaking practices. We always try to highlight Asian female filmmakers as well as LGBTQ themes in films in our programming choices. We have often included films about immigrants, ethnic minorities and political controversies in our program.

One film slot in the festival programme is secured for a documentary, which is either about history, current issues or highlights a particular place or country.

### Talk Events

The program of the festival is enhanced by talk events related to the themes and topics of films. Specialists on the given issues are invited to do an after-screening discussion that takes place at the festival venue. These might involve refugees and human rights issues, conducted by Amnesty International Finland and local NGOs doing development co-operation in Asia. For example, a Rithy Panh movie preceded a talk with a well-known local reporter who was a correspondent in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War. A talk event on gay rights in East Asia with a focus on Taiwan (the first Asian country to

legalize same-sex marriage) was connected to a Taiwanese film with a gay theme. In the summer of 2021, we organized a talk event about the current political crisis in Myanmar in relation to the screening of a Burmese film.

There is also a focus on the arts of the region. For example, an Asian theatre and dance specialist from the Finnish Theatre Academy discussed dance and Asian traditional theatre practices in relation to two films in the program that highlighted this artistic tradition. Lighter talk events have revolved, for example, around hiking in Japan and other cultural subjects.

These talk events open up the topics, themes and styles of our films to local audiences, and increase their educational value.

### Filmmaker Guests from Asia

Guest directors Q&As are organised to delve into the practice of filmmaking, as well as the inspirations behind the films. Discussions and audience Q&As deepen the image of filmmaking practices in Asian countries. Additionally, a talk event with Indonesian female director Kmaila Andini and a Finnish female film director was held to discuss the issue of women in filmmaking.

During the pandemic, the festival conducted Zoom interviews with Asian filmmakers. These were posted on the festival's YouTube channel and shared on the festival webpage and Facebook page, as well as on Asia-related discussion pages on social media.

In the future, HCA hopes to increase the use of guest directors to, for example, do a visit to local film schools.

### Artistic Events

Saturday night arts club evening and entertainment-related events are also included in the program. In recent years, a butoh dancer from Japan, who lives and teaches butoh in Finland, performed, and in 2020, a Beijing Opera performance with Finnish theatre professionals, who have studied Beijing Opera in China, took place. These live events aim to introduce Asian aesthetics and means of expression to Finnish audiences.

### Co-programming for other venues

Helsinki Cine Aasia co-programs for other organizations. It recommends Asian films, often classics, to the Finnish National Audiovisual Institute (who works as the national film archive in Finland) for their film screenings. These take place around the festival dates in early spring.

The programming team member is also in the programming group for a Helsinki-based art house theatre - Cinema Orion, for which they program Asian films. For example, in the summer of 2021, HCA and Orion co-organized a Cat Film Day, during which three Japanese films, in which cats feature prominently, were screened. These were accompanied by festival programming director's introductions to the meaning of cats in Japanese popular culture.

### Educating volunteers

The festival also worked as a place for the education of volunteers on event organizing. Volunteers meet before the festival to learn about ticket sales systems, customer service, security, theatre venue work, film traffic and other tasks related to the managing of the actual event. In 2020, the volunteers' tasks also included the maintenance of hygiene at the venues due to COVID-19.

Some of our volunteers have specialized in PR and information services, for example the social media of the festival, or photography of the festival events, as well as writing press releases on the festival.

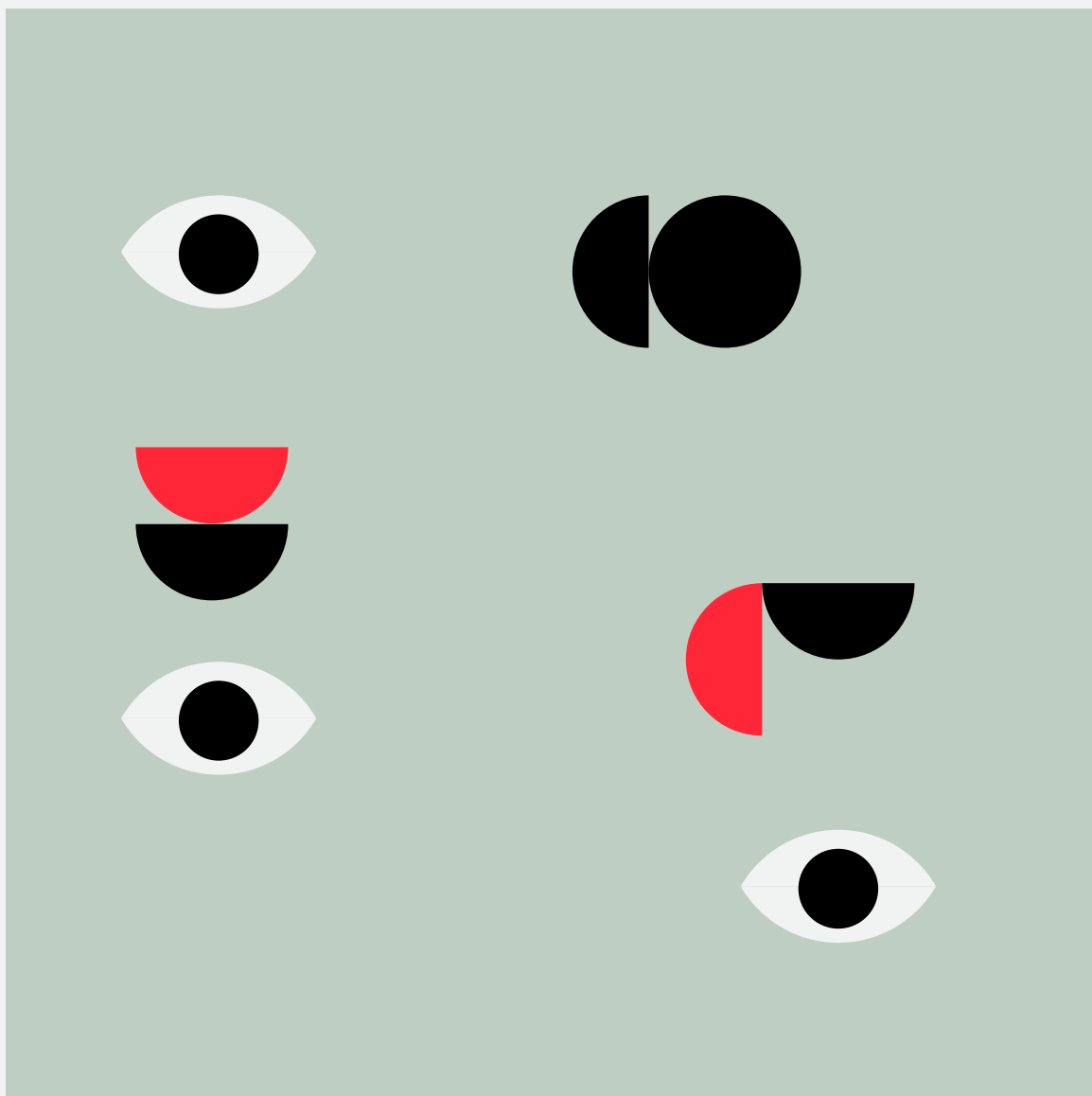
These tasks have provided volunteers with knowledge on good practices in cultural event production. For many, the festival also provided a special channel to get to know Asia and Asian cinema.

The festival organizes a post-festival afterparty for the staff and the volunteers. These have sometimes included light Asia-related programs. For example, a local Asian tea importer was once invited to have a tea-tasting session at the party.

# Inspirations

## Selected Educational Activities of Institutions from Poland, Italy, the Netherlands, and Finland that Refer to Asian Cultures

Many institutions offer interesting activities in order to introduce the culture and art of Asian countries to the audience. Below is a description of selected organizations, as well as the workshops and lectures they have to offer. These can be an inspiration for activities accompanying film screenings.



# Poland

## The Asia and Pacific Museum in Warsaw

[www.muzeumazji.pl/en](http://www.muzeumazji.pl/en)



The Asia and Pacific Museum was established in 1973. It was founded by Andrzej Wawrzyniak – diplomat and traveler. For many years, Wawrzyniak collected objects from different Asian countries. Eventually he brought to Poland over four thousand artefacts, such as masks, weapons, theatre puppets, pottery, and books. These objects were the first exhibits in the Museum. Over the years, the institution bought and received many items from donors. Now its collection consists of 23 thousand exhibits from Asia, Australia, and Oceania.

The museum organizes temporary exhibitions and will launch its permanent collection in 2022. The museum's permanent activities include educational workshops for schools, workshops for adults, meetings, talks, and lectures.

### Examples of workshops:

#### — Asian Games

Japanese kendama, mikado and Chinese tangram, board games, Tibetan to tse, Vietnamese bầu cua cá cọp and many other games from East and Southeast Asia.

Competitions and activities develop children's manual skills, perceptiveness, reflex, imagination and creativity.

The workshops are based on simple, yet exciting games from Asian countries. The proposed games can be played using objects that everyone has at home: sticks, a piece of string, paper, scissors and a pencil, and packaging.

#### — Walking on a Chinese Wall

During the classes, participants learn how the Chinese civilization was created, who built the Great Wall, how silk fabrics are made, and why nephrite was more valuable than gold. The participants of the classes play the role of ancient artists and create their own terracotta army.

#### — The Faces of Tradition and Beliefs – The masks of Asia and the Pacific

Creative workshops on mysterious "faces" from Asia and the Pacific. During the workshop, participants make masks inspired by objects from the Museum's collection (Nepal, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea) using various materials.

## — Musical Traditions of Indonesia

A multimedia presentation about classical and ethnic music from selected islands in Indonesia. During these classes, participants learn about the instruments, scales, notations and playing techniques used in Indonesia and try their hand at playing selected instruments. The classes are illustrated with numerous audiovisual examples.

## — Angklung. Bamboo Music

Workshops on bamboo instruments from the Sunda region (Indonesia). Participants practice not only musical hearing and their sense of rhythm, but also motor coordination and group work skills. The practical classes are preceded by a multimedia presentation outlining the history of angklung and its contemporary condition and functioning in Indonesia. Participants learn a song in Indonesian, which they perform on instruments.

### Examples of Lectures and Classes:

- Asian Tattoo
- What Should a Tourist Know?
- Religions of India
- Indonesia – the Largest Archipelago in the World in its Diversity
- Islam – the History in Pictures
- Hijab on Insta. Modern Muslim Women vs the Internet
- Between Text and Screen. Screenings of Korean Literature
- The Truth of the World – the Truth of Reportage and How Much Fiction is in Non-Fiction?
- A Robot Priest – Tradition and Modernity in Japan

## Korean Culture Center

[www.kocis.go.kr/eng/openInformation.do](http://www.kocis.go.kr/eng/openInformation.do)

An institution located at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, promoting Korean culture in Warsaw.

The Centre runs popular Korean language courses, organises the Warsaw Korean Film Festival, the Korean Jazz Autumn and also hosts art exhibitions and workshops such as:

- Dance with Fans - Buchaechum
- K-pop Academy
- Mask painting workshops
- Hanbok dressing workshops
- Korean calligraphy workshops
- Woodcut workshop

## The Manggha Museum of Japanese Art and Technology in Cracow

[www.manggha.pl/en](http://www.manggha.pl/en)

The Manggha Museum explores mutual cultural relations between Poland and Japan - the East and the West.

The institution reaches various audiences by offering a wide array of events and activities, at the popular, specialist, and academic levels. The comprehensive educational activities are based on their own original programme.

Almost every day, groups of students visit the Museum to see current exhibitions. Occasions that invariably attract large numbers of visitors are events held on a regular basis, often relating to traditional Japanese festivals. This category includes the monthly readings of Japanese fairy tales and the celebrations of the Japanese Children's Day, Kodomo no hi, organized every year.

**Examples of educational activities offered by Manggha:**

- Culinary Travel around Japan – a board game (<http://bityl.pl/Cvmeu>) in which players learn about the eating, culinary habits, and dishes of the Japanese islands
- Online mini workshops: kendama, origami, hanafuda, ikebana
- Online quizzes connected with Japanese culture (Quizme)
- Japanese calligraphy workshops
- Sumi-e painting classes
- Furoshiki workshop (traditional art of fabric wrapping)
- The World of Tea: lecture and testing

## Italy



### The Japan Cultural Institute in Rome

The institute organizes numerous meetings open to the public focusing on Japanese culture. The meetings tend to target an adult and advanced level audience, and are often organized together with universities that have a relation to Asian studies (for example, the University of Rome "Sapienza," the University of Naples "L'Orientale," or the University Ca' Foscari of Venice).

### Korean Cultural Center in Rome

[www.kocis.go.kr/eng/openInformation.do](http://www.kocis.go.kr/eng/openInformation.do)

The Korean Cultural Center opened its doors in Rome in 2016. The centre has a special space dedicated to modern Korean culture, often known through the phenomenon of K-Wave (Korean wave) represented mainly by K-Pop music and K-Drama. It organizes language, traditional dance and cooking courses, and has launched the initiative called K-POP Academy with special dance and singing courses.

### MAO (Museo dell'Arte Orientale) di Torino – Museum of Oriental Art in Turin

Among the most recent institutions dedicated to oriental art in Italy is the MAO of Turin, inaugurated in December 2008: one of the major museums in Italy and Europe for its expertise and research in the field of Oriental art. The Museum provides a broad overview of the art of ancient Asian cultures. The galleries are arranged over the three levels of the building, and contain art from South and Southeast Asia (the Indian subcontinent and the Indochinese Peninsula). It is the most important Italian collection of Chinese funerary art, spanning a period from the Neolithic period to the Tang period (10<sup>th</sup> century CE), religious and secular art from Japan, art from the Himalayas (Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan), and a smaller but remarkable collection of Islamic art.

The MAO offers a variety of family events designed and organised by the Educational Department. Special tours and workshops offer families a "different and fun" Museum experience. Parents can also choose to celebrate their child's birthday at the museum. The museum's proposal includes an educational activity and a space where it is possible to eat a variety of dishes. The key activity is the game of treasure hunting: the participants have to look for objects hidden inside the museum. Each stage allows them to get to know some significant works of the MAO.

The Museum of Oriental Art proposes activities for the Summer Centres, with visit routes and workshops designed and conducted by the Educational Department.

#### Examples of visit routes followed by activities include:

##### — eSPICEally

A journey through the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia, and the Islamic countries of Asia follows the scented and coloured trace left by the spices from these regions. In the workshop, each participant receives a card-stock, glue and spices to create their own scented design.

##### — Weapons and Samurai – origami workshop

When discovering the collection dedicated to Japan, the itinerary ranges from the appeal of the Japanese samurai armor and the imposing wooden statues, to the refinement of the paper works. The appointment ends with an origami workshop.

##### — Let's Shape the Clay

After a walk in search of ceramic works in the gallery dedicated to China or in the gallery dedicated to the Islamic countries of Asia, the participants have a chance to discover the magic of clay in a laboratory of manipulation and creation of shapes.

##### — Oriental New Eyes!

A visit to the permanent collections to discover the faces in the statues, prints, paintings and terracotta exhibited. An observation of figurative art in the Orient, from human to divine, through the works of the MAO, allows the creation of a portrait in the laboratory using collages and mixed techniques.

## Civico Museo d'Arte Orientale di Trieste

[www.museoarteorientaletrieste.it](http://www.museoarteorientaletrieste.it)

The Museum of Far Eastern Art in the heart of Trieste, very close to Piazza Unità d'Italia, is situated in a mid-eighteenth century patrician house called the Palazzetto Leo, after the eponymous Trieste family. The last owner, Countess Margherita Nugent, bequeathed the house to the city of Trieste in 1954. Since 2001, the building has been housing the Asian art collections of the Civic Museums of History and Art, including porcelain vases, prints and paintings, sculptures, silk dresses, weapons, and musical instruments, all coming mainly from China and Japan.

The Museum organizes cultural events for all audiences, but especially kids. Among these, they offer a nice series of workshops linked to some traditional festivities in China and Japan, from the Chinese New Year to the Japanese Children's Day. The myths, legends and customs of these distant and fascinating countries were the inspiration, together with the works of art in the Museum. This is a fun way to get to know and appreciate other cultures, while also learning to visit museums with a critical spirit and a keen eye. Examples of the topics addressed at the workshops are:

##### — China. The Chinese New Year

Why isn't New Year's Eve celebrated on January 1st in China? What are the customs related to this holiday? An exciting and creative journey will take children to discover this faraway world.

##### — China. The Lantern Festival

The celebration of the Chinese New Year traditionally ends with the Lantern Festival. Children will discover this special custom and its legends, then build colorful magic lanterns.



— Japan. The Spring Festival

In Japan, the beginning of spring is celebrated with a national holiday and the custom of admiring the flowers, especially the beautiful cherry blossoms. Children are invited to look for flowers and natural beauty in the Japanese artworks of the Museum and reinterpret them in their personal way.

— Japan. Children's Day

On the occasion of Children's Day, the museum offers the chance to discover fairy tales and Japanese traditions related to kites, and other magical objects suspended between heaven and earth. By inspiring themselves with the works of art in the Museum, children can build and decorate their special Japanese kite.

— China. The Dragon Boat Festival

The traditional Chinese festival at the beginning of summer, the Dragon Boat Festival, offers the starting point for a fun workshop dedicated to this fantastic animal, so popular in Chinese iconography. Children are involved in a creative workshop, which starts from the observation of the Chinese artworks of the Museum.



# The Netherlands

## CinemAsia

[www.cinemasia.nl/en](http://www.cinemasia.nl/en)

CinemAsia is a non-profit, independent organization whose main annual activity is the CinemAsia Film Festival. CinemAsia's main goal is to enhance the Asian visibility in culture and media, through which they foster an inclusive society. During the festival, a platform is given to express and celebrate the Asian LGBTQ+ community, both in the programming of films and in the side programme.



## Asian Union / Body Sessions – Workshop

During the CinemAsia Film Festival, choreographer Jija Sohn led a workshop focusing on movement that is inspired by the deep listening text of Pauline Oliveros: "Deep Listening comes from noticing my listening or listening to my listening". Through a series of exercises, participants are focused on enhancing openness and encouraging fluidity of roles. How can one move away from setting roles and blur the boundaries between, for instance, the performer and the audience? Can we engage in active spectatorship? Can we be the performers and the audience at the same time?

In collaboration with: [www.facebook.com/theasianuniongransandberg](https://www.facebook.com/theasianuniongransandberg)

## OUT&ABROAD: Interrelationship Panel

This panel discussion explores what it is like to be in an intercultural relationship, focusing on its different aspects. It looks at relationships between people from a different generation, our views on growing old together, but also at how people talk about sex, and their experiences with their first partner from a different culture. It also compares how that differs to having a partner from the same region. An important part of the discussion was the preconceptions and misconceptions people often have of intercultural relationships.

in collaboration with: [www.outandabroad.nl](http://www.outandabroad.nl)

## Filipino LGBT Europe – After Film Talk / Lingua Franca

The forum outlined the current situation and political policies affecting trans communities in the USA and the Philippines.

## Tropenmuseum

[www.tropenmuseum.nl/en](http://www.tropenmuseum.nl/en)

The Tropenmuseum is a museum of world cultures, housed in one of the most impressive museum buildings in the Netherlands. Every one of the objects on display

tells a human story and makes you curious about the vast cultural diversity that enriches the world. The museum tells visitors about the universal themes like mourning, celebrating, decorating, praying or fighting. From Africa to West and Southeast Asia, from New Guinea to Latin America, in the Tropenmuseum you discover that besides the differences, we are all the same: human.

## Storytime Momotarō | 桃太郎 / ももたろ | Peach boy

Momotarō is a hero in Japanese folk tales. Using a kamishibai, a form of Japanese street theatre and storytelling, his stories are told to a varied audience, mostly children and their parents.

## Manga Drawing Workshop

Learning how to draw manga, Japanese comics or graphic novels, using examples set by the founders of this medium, Katsushika Hokusai and Osamu Tezuka, who modernised manga.

## Meet & Greet with Yo-Kai

Meeting, greeting, hugging and taking a picture with the yokai (supernatural entities and spirits in Japanese folklore). People think they don't know any yokai, but as a feature in many games, they are more embedded in our society than one might think.

## Research Center for Material Culture

The Research Center for Material Culture (RCMC) is a flagship research institute within the Tropenmuseum (Amsterdam), Museum Volkenkunde (Leiden), the Afrika Museum (Berg en Dal) and the Wereldmuseum (Rotterdam) that serves as a focal point for research on ethnographic collections in the Netherlands. Our research projects and programs address many different topics: their historical and contemporary meaning, the national and global histories of which they are a part of, and the contemporary societal questions around the issues of heritage, cultural identity and belonging that these objects raise.

## A Future Where Racism Has no Place

A series of (online) lectures about race, racism and anti-racism in the museum. The recent global anti-racism protests and mobilizations have brought into question the responsibility of public institutions, not only in addressing ongoing forms of structural and systemic racism, but also in the role that they can play in the fight against racism. While the scale and intensity of the current anti-racism mobilization is undoubtedly exceptional, the critique of museums could become a part of a much longer history of institutional critique. Aiming at professionals, but open for a wide audience

[www.materialculture.nl/en/research/spaces-speculation/future-where-racism-has-no-place](http://www.materialculture.nl/en/research/spaces-speculation/future-where-racism-has-no-place)

Some of the lectures can be rewatched on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfhYfaGHd01IV6MKe2Q3cpeWee2heMpQc](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLfhYfaGHd01IV6MKe2Q3cpeWee2heMpQc)

## IFFR & IDFA

### IFFR

[www.iffrr.nl](http://www.iffrr.nl)

International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) offers a high-quality line-up of fiction and documentary feature films, short films and media art. The festival's focus is on the recent work by talented new filmmakers from all over the world. However, there is also room for retrospectives and themed programmes. IFFR actively supports new and adventurous filmmaking talent through its co-production market CineMart, its Hubert Bals Fund, the Rotterdam Lab, and other industry activities.

### IDFA

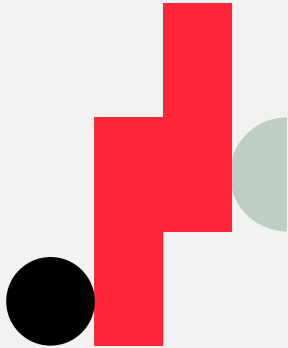
[www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)

International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) aims to bring audiences closer to documentaries, as it believes in their power. The power of creative documentaries that deepen, reveal, and inspire. Documentaries that bring people closer together. Documentaries that

stand for change by inspiring people to act. Therefore, it stimulates the production and distribution of a wide range of documentary films, while also developing the demand for them. In this way, IDFA contributes to expanding and improving the international documentary climate, specifically by promoting inclusivity and giving a voice to underrepresented filmmakers.

These two film festivals in the Netherlands don't focus on Asia as much, but often have interesting side programs of talks, masterclasses and educational content that relate to Asian film. Some examples:

- IFFR x De Balie: The Freedom Lecture by Kim Kyungmook: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=u\\_IM0XDoQPc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u_IM0XDoQPc)
- Masterclass Jia Zhangke: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=J24WHRn9HEc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J24WHRn9HEc)
- Masterclass: Bong Joon Ho: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTEhmClq4DE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vTEhmClq4DE)
- Docschool Online: Free and unlimited access to films and teaching materials for teachers and their students. Different themes with films from all over the world, such as women's rights, immigration and refugees. [www.idfa.nl/en/info/docschool-online](http://www.idfa.nl/en/info/docschool-online)



# Finland

## The Chinese New Year in Helsinki

[www.kiinalainenuusivuosi.fi/en](http://www.kiinalainenuusivuosi.fi/en)

Since 2007, the cities of Helsinki and Beijing have worked together to organise a Chinese New Year celebration in Helsinki. The program includes Chinese performances by both visiting Chinese and local groups. These performances include Lion Dances, singers, acrobatics and martial arts. The Mayor of Helsinki and the PRC Ambassador to Finland deliver speeches and the audience has a chance to enjoy Chinese food offered by the street market sellers. On the video screens, there is a direct contact to Beijing and their CCTV Chinese New Year program. On PRC midnight, 6 p.m. Helsinki time, the countdown to the New Year directly from Beijing is followed. The evening ends with fireworks. The event is popular with both Finnish families and the Chinese community living in Finland.

## Hanami Party

In Roihuvuori in Helsinki there is a big cherry tree park, planted by Japanese companies. Every May, on a Sunday afternoon, there is a Hanami party, organized by the Roihuvuori Neighborhood Association, and supported by the Japanese Embassy in Finland. Numerous Japan-related associations, such as friendship associations, Japan-related hobby associations, food stalls and similar, gather

in the park where a large crowd picnics on the grass. Performances include songs by the local Japanese school, martial arts performances, the parapara dance, the butoh dance, and a competition for the best cosplay costume. The event is also popular amongst the owners of Japanese breed dogs (shibas or akitas) who take their dogs to the picnic.

## Local Museums

Finnish and Helsinki metropolitan area museums often have exhibitions with Asian art. During this millennium, they include an ukiyoe exhibition at the Ateneum, an Ai Wei Wei exhibition at the HAM - Helsinki City Art Museum, and currently there is the Chiharu Shiota installation at the Espoo Modern Art Museum (EMMA). The museums often have workshops and lecture events related to the exhibitions. They also all have special group guidings and workshops for school groups.

## World Village Festival

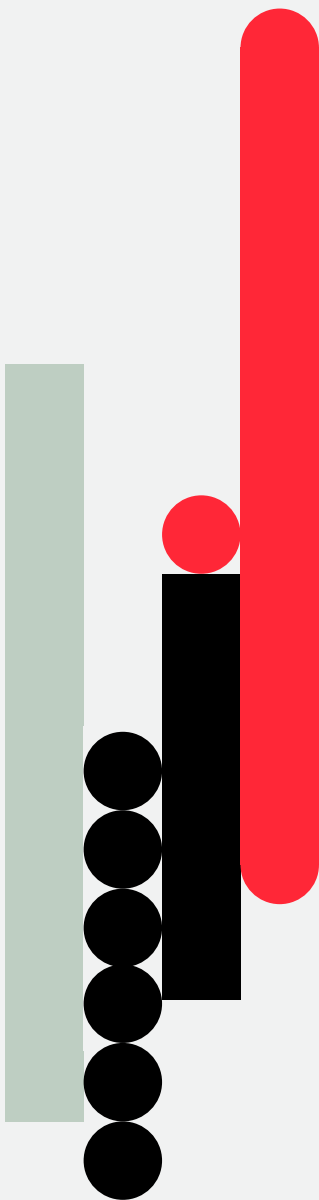
[www.maailmakylassa.fi/en/in-english](http://www.maailmakylassa.fi/en/in-english)

This yearly weekend event in May attracts Finnish NPOs, development aid organizations, political youth organizations, and different solidarity groups to organize an impressive amount of events. These include talks, music performances, workshops, kids' activities, film screenings, and different demos for the audience to listen to, discuss, and participate in. The event focuses on the subject of developing countries and issues of urgency, such as climate change, political freedom, migration, conflict solving, minorities, women, children, ethnic minorities, and similar themes. The event brings to Finland speakers, political activists and music performers from Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Asia. Food stalls offer food from these areas as well. The event is organized by FINGO - Finnish Development NGOs.

# Inspirations

## Possible Short Scenarios for a Lesson or a Meeting on Asian Film for Adult Audiences

A set of Ideas for Events and Activities Around  
Selected Movies



## Understanding the Modern World Through Asian Cinema

by Marcin Krasnowolski,  
Five Flavours Asian Film Festival

### Suggested screenings:

- Tampopo (Juzo Itami, 1985, Japan)
- The Farewell (Lulu Wang, 2019, China / USA)

The biggest problem in popularizing Asian cinema (and, more broadly, the cultures of Asian countries) is that for most viewers the films from this region seem exotic and detached from their everyday reality. Educational activities accompanying film screenings should not only bring a given culture closer, but also make the audience aware

that we all function in a global environment and that our cultures have been intertwined for decades. Without Asia, there would be no world today, and this world cannot be fully understood without understanding Asia.

## Recommendations

### Activities related to the screening of the Japanese film "Tampopo" by Juzo Itami from 1985

"Tampopo" is a film well-recognized and liked by viewers interested in Japanese cinema, but still waiting to be discovered by mass audiences. Several valuable events can be organized around it, showing how the world's cultures intertwine in the field of film art and... culinary art.

The former is already revealed in the way "Tampopo" was advertised when it was released. The film was called (quite jokingly and perversely) "the first ramen western," referring to the classic Hollywood genre, but also to the spaghetti westerns, i.e. the impressive and effective deconstruction of the genre in Italy in the 1960s.

One of the breakthrough spaghetti westerns that paved the way for the great careers of Sergio Leone (director) and Clint Eastwood (actor) was "A Fistful of Dollars" in 1964. Interestingly, the film is almost a literal copy of Akira Kurosawa's "Yojimbo" from 1961, a samurai film. An expert lecture accompanying the "Tampopo" screening, explaining how the history of westerns and samurai cinema has been intertwining for decades, will show how close and fascinating the inspirations of artists from different parts of the world are.

The story of the interconnection between culinary inspirations can be combined with the preparation and tasting of ramen, a dish available almost all over the world. The origin of ramen is again a surprise - this well-known Japanese soup is not Japanese, but... Chinese, borrowed and improved by the Japanese. This is another layer of the meaning of Itami's film – should we still treat ramen westerns as Japanese works?

The screening of the 2019 film "The Farewell" directed by Lulu Wang, can become a starting point for a discussion on the value of migration. The film is a story of a young

Chinese woman living in the United States (and trying to break through professionally), who returns to her homeland years later, due to the serious illness of her beloved grandmother. The return makes her realize that she does not feel at home in neither China nor the USA.

Nowadays, immigrants do not have an easy time, becoming targets of populist attacks, which often fall on fertile soil. They also have to deal with the loneliness and cultural and communication barriers that await them in their new homeland. At the same time, migration processes are a chance for a better life for people who decide to do so. Their work is also a great contribution to the economy of the country they decide to live in.

Moderated by a migration expert, the discussion should make people aware of the fact that such processes have always taken place and they had positive effects in the vast majority of cases. Many nations that now oppose the influx of foreigners have themselves had episodes in their history that forced them to leave en masse.

For example: in Poland, the so-called relocation of immigrants proposed by the EU met with a very negative response from the Poles, and an extreme populist party has been brought to power on slogans that oppose these mechanisms. The Poles seem to have forgotten that not so long ago, after the accession to the EU and the opening of the labour markets of Western European countries, they lined up for buses and planes heading West.

## Food Brings Communities Together, Bridging Gaps Between Cultures

by Nancy Fornoville  
CAMERA JAPAN Festival

### Suggested screenings:

— Every Day a Good Day  
(Tatsushi Omori, 2018, Japan)

— Hana's Miso Soup  
(Tomoaki Akune & Nobuo Mizuta, 2014, Japan)

— Complicity (Kei Chikaura, 2018, Japan)

When different cultures meet, food very often acts as a binding factor. Philosophers, such as Alain de Botton, have pointed out that with the declining importance of religion in Western society, we are losing a part of the fabric of our communities. A way to reinforce these bonds is to organize communal meals. By extension, it makes sense to organize intercultural events with a focus on one country, where people come together to eat a meal, and combine this with a film and debate/talk afterward. For example, inviting people of Japanese or Vietnamese origin to provide the food and join the meal. The concepts of food and eating meals together are important in Asian society. There is a wide variety of films where food and drinks play a role, be it more or less central.

Focus can be put on the food itself, but also on Japan's more societal topics presented in films, such as:

— Every Day a Good Day (Tatsushi Omori, 2018, Japan)

Focus on the tea ceremony, but the film also talks about dealing with life adversities. This can be a good topic for a broader conversation.

— Hana's Miso Soup (Tomoaki Akune & Nobuo Mizuta, 2014, Japan)

A film about a mother diagnosed with breast cancer and how she prepares her daughter for the worst. Discussion about how different cultures deal with illness and loss.

— Complicity (Kei Chikaura, 2018, Japan)

A Chinese man moves illegally to Japan to improve his life and gain opportunities. Discussion about migrants and the reasons they make certain decisions.

Other examples of films that feature food:

— Tampopo (Juzo Itami, 1985, Japan)

— The Taste of Pho (Mariko Bobrik, 2019, Poland)

— Seven Samurai (Akira Kurosawa, 1954, Japan)

— Eat Drink Man Woman (Ang Lee, 1994, Taiwan)

— Ramen Shop (Eric Khoo, 2018, Singapore)

— The Lunchbox (Ritesh Batra, 2013, India)

— Mr Long (SABU, 2017, Japan)

— Wandering Chef (Park Hye-reong, 2019, S. Korea)

— Sweet Bean (Naomi Kawase, 2015, Japan)

## Food and Environment, Tradition, and Temples in Japanese Film

by Eija Niskanen  
Helsinki Cine Aasia

**Suggested screenings:**

— Rikyu (Hiroshi Teshigahara, 1989)

— Death of a Tea Master (Kei Kumai, 1989)

Both films depict the monk Rikyu, who brought tea ceremony from China to Japan. The screenings could be accompanied by food and tea events connected to Buddhist tradition.

OKAZU, a book by Marjo Seki and Heikki Valkama (2021), has recently been published in Finland. The book introduces the principles of shojin ryori, Japanese temple food, and gives recipes for preparing these simple, vegetarian foods, using local ingredients, some of which can be gathered from nature. Marjo Seki used to own a Japanese

restaurant in Tampere, and before that spent 20 years in Japan. Heikki Valkama, a Finnish broadcasting company YLE reporter, speaks fluent Japanese and reported, amongst others, from the Tokyo Olympics. The book release was accompanied by sample food preparation showcases at Helsinki Book Messe. Similar events can be arranged in relation to a screening of the Japanese film, which speaks either about Japanese food or Japanese tradition, especially related to religion. The workshop would also fit with the vegan boom, as well as environmental themes. It also increases the audience's and the participants' idea of sushi being the only Japanese food amongst the variety of Japanese cuisine. A conversation with the book's authors at the meeting accompanying the film would certainly be a big attraction for the audience.

Similarly, a Helsinki-based urasenke school tea ceremony group could be asked to run a tea ceremony workshop and tea tasting for the film audience. The local ikebana hobby group could also participate in the event and run a workshop.

## Reciprocal Tributes and Denied Appropriations

Udine Far East Film Festival

### Suggested screenings:

- Paprika (Paprika, Satoshi Kon, 2006), Inception (Christopher Nolan, 2010)
  - Ghost in the Shell (Ghost in the Shell Kōkaku kidōtai, Mamoru Oshii, 1995), Ghost in the Shell (Rupert Sanders, 2017)
  - Matrix (Lana Wachowski, Lilly Wachowski, 1999), Animatrix (Andy Jones, Mahiro Maeda, Shinichirō Watanabe, Yoshiaki Kawajiri, Takeshi Koike, Kōji Morimoto, Peter Chung, 2003)
  - The Castle in the Sky (Tenkū no shiro Rapyuta, Hayao Miyazaki, 1986), Avatar (James Cameron, 2009)
  - Heidi (Arupusu no shōjo Haiji, Isao Takahata, 1974), Heidi (Alan Gspomer, 2015)
  - Rémi (Ienakiko, Osamu Dezaki, 1978), Rémi, Nobody's Boy (Antoine Blossier, 2018)
  - Anne of Green Gables (Akage no Anne, Isao Takahata, 1979), Anne With an E (creator Moira Walley-Beckett, 2017)
- From a linguistic and technological point of view, cinema has evolved also through the reciprocal influence of different talents. At first, it was a matter of drawing on previous arts (literature, painting, sculpture, music, theater), then of confronting different cultural traditions, languages and aesthetics. When Western and Oriental cinema met, they influenced each other through rewritings, quotations and homages. What has long been lacking, especially in animated cinema or in popular live-action cinema inspired by animation, has been reciprocity. Western screenwriters, directors, and producers have often felt this was inevitable. On the other hand, drawing inspiration from films to the limit of plagiarism has almost never been perceived as improper behavior or a sign of hypocrisy.
- The lesson can be held for a minimum of two hours, but can be expanded by adding more case studies or deepening some particular aspects relating to the subject.
- It can start with a brief introduction to the birth and development of animated cinema in the West and in the East through some audiovisual examples taken from the pioneers of Japanese animation (Shimokawa, Kitayama, Kōuchi, Ofuji) and Western animation (Cohl, McCay, Fleischer).
- Bambi (David Hand, 1942), Kimba The White Lion (Gekijōban Janguru Taitei, Hayashi Shigeyuki, 1965), The Lion King (Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff, 1994)
  - Metropolis (Fritz Lang, 1927), Metropolis (Metoroporisu, Rin Tarō, 2001)
  - Astro Boy (Tetsuwan Atomu, Osamu Tezuka, 1963), Astro Boy (David Bowers, 2009)



This is followed by a focus on the two personalities who defined popular animation in the East and the West, that is Osamu Tezuka and Walt Disney. A short montage exemplifying the masters can be presented to define the style and recurring themes. The examples can be taken, for Walt Disney, from the "Silly Symphonies" and from the feature films that define the canon of the so-called Disney Classics; for Tezuka, that would be extracts from his short films, the television series "Atom Boy and Princess Saphir", and the feature films made by Mushi Production, of which Tezuka was the founder.

From the overview, the focus can move on to the analysis of the conflictual relationship between Osamu Tezuka and Walt Disney. An admirer of the film "Bambi", Tezuka decided to honour Disney's work by drawing his characters with large, moving and expressive eyes. The homage will be repaid years later with the resumption in "The Lion King" of some scenes and important narrative articulations taken from "Kimba the White Lion". This would be done without a single word of recognition of Tezuka's work. The statements of those who worked on the Disney film (animator Tom Sito; story artist Mark Kausler; directors Roger Allers, Rob Minkoff, and Roy Disney) all point in the direction of a casual coincidence, a lack of intentionality. Unlike his American colleagues, when Tezuka draws the "Metropolis" manga (from which Rin Tarō will make the feature film of the same name) he will have no difficulty in paying homage to Fritz Lang.

Reference can also be made to a more recent and equally conflicting comparison: that between Disney and Studio Ghibli. Disney has been distributing Miyazaki and Takahata's films in the United States and Europe since the second half of the 1990s.

Why were Western authors able to pretend for so long that they found no source of inspiration in the East? For many decades, distribution was chaotic: Japanese "arthouse" animation reached only festivals, while popular and serial animation (though of remarkable narrative quality) was intended almost exclusively for the television audience of children and teenagers. The presence of festivals dedicated to Asian cinema, the diffusion of Studio Ghibli films abroad, the rise of streaming platforms, the birth of boutique distribution companies, and the ease with which one can now buy DVDs and Blu-Rays from every corner of the world, has made it more difficult to declare as absolutely

original the ideas derived from the work of other authors. A different access to primary sources was seen, for example, after the release of "The Matrix". A few years later, the Wachowski sisters produced "Animatrix", an anthology of short films that was intended to be a sort of reparation for the numerous unstated (but repeatedly pointed out online by viewers) borrowings from Japanese animated films and in particular "Ghost in the Shell".

With examples collected from the titles listed in the filmography, it can be shown how Japanese animated cinema has influenced Western cinema and vice versa. These examples also highlight how, in spite of their denial, Japanese authors have produced animated versions of the classics of Western children's literature as strong as Disney's versions of classic fairy tales. This is a process that both celebrates and re-elaborates a long-standing tradition: the Japanese reinterpretations of Western classics, such as "Heidi", "Rémi", and "Anne of Green Gables" were so iconically powerful that they have been an influence for later live-action versions filmed in Europe or the United States.



# Epilogue

This report is a collection of inspirations and good practices gathered by the organizers of the Five Flavours Film Festival, Udine Far East Film Festival, CAMERA JAPAN Festival, and Helsinki Cine Aasia during three years of work on the Asia Cinema Education project. In the course of the project, the partners shared their own educational practices, as well as highlighted valuable initiatives carried out locally. The most interesting ones are presented in this publication with the hope that they will help create more educational events around film screenings on a smaller and larger scale.

In addition to this compilation, the project resulted in the creation of the Asian Cinema Education website, which includes a series of lectures on Asian cinematography and a webinar course on film journalism and criticism. In addition, long-term internships, trainings, and workshops empowering participating organizations and their audiences, were carried out as part of the campaign. This includes a series of workshops and the organization of the stay in Warsaw of 12 members of the International People's Jury of the Five Flavours Festival in 2021.

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