

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Origins of the South Korean Film Renaissance

Lingnan University & University of Washington Joint Film Studies Conference

November 2-4, 2023, Hong Kong
Lingnan University & M+

Keynote Speakers
KIM Hong Joon (Director, Korean Film Archive)
&
Industry Expert (TBA)

When Park Chan-wook's debut feature *The Moon Is... the Sun's Dream* was released in the spring of 1992, the South Korean film industry had the lowest domestic film market share in its history. From the 1970s through the 1990s, the Korean film market, like the markets of many countries around the world, was dominated by Hollywood. Local film critic Kim Young-jin lamented, "The Korean film industry began in 1993 without a single coin to inherit from the past, and in a state of self-examination, embarked on a solitary battle for its very survival. It was a year distinguished by steely resolve and a solitary, terrible fight for survival." The majority of film critics, students, and industry professionals viewed the future of South Korean cinema as bleak.

Surprisingly, barely nine years later, South Korea became the first film industry in recent history to reclaim its domestic market from Hollywood. Soon thereafter, South Korean cinema entered its most iconic year in its history. The year 2003 brought a wave of new South Korean films, including *Oldboy*, *A Good Lawyer's Wife*, *Save the Green Planet!*, *A Tale of Two Sisters*, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring*, and *Memories of Murder*. In 2004, the New York-based film magazine *Film Comment* published its first special issue on Korean cinema. Chuck Stephens, the special issue's editor, commended South Korean cinema as "one of the greatest renaissances in global filmmaking the world has ever seen." Since then, South Korean cinema made a history. Indeed, South Korean cinema provides one of the most striking case studies of non-Western cinematic success in the age of the neoliberal world order and Hollywood's domination in the global film market. What happened to the South Korean film culture between 1992 and 2003? How did what was once an "invisible" cinema become one of the world's most influential film industries so quickly? And what implications does the South Korean film renaissance have for the ways we approach national and transnational cinema more broadly?

Hosted by the Department of Digital Arts and Creative Industries at Lingnan University in Hong Kong and co-organized by the Department of Asian Languages and Literature at the University of Washington, *The Origins of the South Korean Film Renaissance* will offer invaluable opportunities not only to discover the resilient, persistent, and transformational power of South Korean cinema but also to build a vibrant intellectual community, where film and media scholars, filmmakers, journalists, and industry experts collectively examine South Korean film cultures and industries in the 1990s and early 2000s. The three-day conference will bring together leading scholars and experts of South Korean and Asian cinemas from the Asia-Pacific, Europe, and North America to present their research findings and new developments in methodology.

The conference will include approximately 12-15 academic papers and roundtable discussions from 3-5 film critics, journalists, and industry experts. Currently, we invite 15-minute presentation papers from scholars and graduate students. Papers presented at the conference will be developed and then considered for publication in a special issue of a high-ranking peer-reviewed journal, and/or an edited volume with a major international press.

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

Cinephilia and the post-1990s New Korean Cinema
International film festivals in South Korea, including BIFF, PIFAN, and JIFF
International film festivals outside South Korea and global reception of South Korean cinema
Film education, film schools, and film institutes
Film journalism, including Cine 21, Film 2.0, Kino, Premiere, and Screen
Art cinemas and cinemathèque movements

Film and media archives in Korea
New producers and the age of debut directors
Translations of film textbooks and the introduction of global film theories
Reception of Asian cinema in Korea
Short films and independent cinema
DV documentaries
Multiplexes and the demise of local double feature movie theaters
Cable TV and IPTV
CJ, Lotte, Showbox, and other media conglomerates
IMF Crisis and the Dot Com phenomenon
Women's cinema and female filmmakers
Queer cinema and the emergence of LGBT+ activism
The rise and falls of VHS, DVDs, video rental shops, and the so-called DVD rooms
Globalization and transnational co-production

Accommodation (three nights for those from Asia-Pacific; four nights for those from other regions) and meals during conference will be covered for conference participants. Please submit a 300-word abstract and a brief biographical note by April 8, 2023 to conference organizers Sangjoon LEE (sangjoonlee@ln.edu.hk) and Ungsan KIM (sankim@uw.edu). Participants will be notified of acceptance by late April 2023.

Dr. Sangjoon LEE
Associate Professor and Head
Department of Digital Arts and Creative Industries
Lingnan University

Dr. Ungsan KIM
Assistant Professor of Asian Cinema
Department of Asian Languages and Literature
University of Washington

Sponsors

