

Media Contact:
Norma Broadwater
202-289-1200, ext. 106
nbroadwater@washington.goethe.org



June 19 – 29, 2006

Coming of Age in Asia and Europe Conformity and Rebellion in Film

The Chinese Embassy, the Japan Information and Culture Center, the Alliance Française, the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, and the Goethe-Institut have combined forces to cosponsor a film series that explores the experiences of the next generation in Europe and Asia. These films capture the struggles of youth to find identities and reconcile differences with family and society in a rapidly transforming world.

Each evening will feature a group of European and Asian short films, drawing attention to variations in social change and modernity within the two great cultural realms of Europe and Asia. Each event is followed by a brief discussion led by an expert on the respective countries featured.

A new concept of “Europeanness” is emerging within the European Union, offering bonds between young people who study and live in neighboring countries, even as sharp cultural and social divides remain at home. Similarly, youth in Asia long for a universal Asian culture of modernity that transcends the contradictions of economic and political reality. Germany, France and Italy in Europe, and China, Korea and Japan in East Asia, have each established their own distinct identity as part of a larger cultural mosaic. This film series will draw attention to the similarities and divergences in that process.

The experiences of youth in these films leave us wondering whether the world is shrinking into cultural homogeneity, or whether youth have embraced new patterns of identity that defy our expectations. Is there a distinct Asian or European culture? What elements are common to both regions?

With the support of the Korea International Trade Association

All films are either in English or in their original language with English subtitles.

Monday, June 19, 6:30 pm

Goethe-Institut

812 Seventh Street NW
GERMANY AND CHINA

Escape! (Abhaun!)

Germany, 2004, 16 mm, 9 min., Director: Christoph Wermke

The backwaters of East Germany: stagnation, unemployment, rural exodus. Nico has found a job in west Germany. He is waiting for the bus.

My Parents (Meine Eltern)

Germany, 2003, 35mm, 18 min., Director: Neele Leana Vollmar

Marie has a problem: she has met the man of her life. He is dying to meet her parents. All this would be fine if only Marie hadn't told him that her parents are still madly in love, tolerant of everyone, and not at all frumpy.

My Dad, My Mom

China, 2005, 30 min., Director: Jiao Bo

In a small mountain village of China's Shandong province, humble parents have toiled their whole lives in the fields, saving every penny for their son to go to school. As his parents did not have any photos taken of them until they were in their sixties, he sets out to capture on film their images, their remarkable lives of love and mutual support and their emotions and dreams as ordinary farmers.

A discussion with Yi Chen, American University student, and Olivia Schoeller, *Berliner Zeitung*, will accompany these screenings.

RSVP to 202-289-1200 ext. 168

Wednesday, June 21, 6:30 pm

The Istituto Italiano

2025 M Street NW

ITALY AND JAPAN

Light in the Shadow

Italy, 2006, DVCam, 17 min., Director: Riccardo Papa

A member of an emerging gang in Naples, Alessandro is asked to kill the boss of the rival gang.

Kendama

Japan, 2002, DVD, 15 min., Director: Tetsuo Shinohara

An unsuccessful young musician's mundane life takes a turn for the better when he becomes caught up in an amusing adventure involving a traditional Japanese toy.

Touch on Japan

Japan, 2006, DVD, 9 min.

First-class creators of TV commercials showcase creative images of modern Japan with a cool beat, including current fashion of the youth, the world of animation, and a young kabuki actor who appeals to all generations.

Speakers will include Yutaka Taguchi, George Mason University student

RSVP to 202-223-9800

Thursday, June 22, 6:30 pm

Japan Information and Culture Center

1155 21st Street NW

JAPAN AND FRANCE

ARITA

Japan, 2002, DVD, 15 min., Director: Shunji Iwai

A young woman realizes that ARITA, an anime-like creature that follows her around, is invisible to everyone else. When she tries to rid herself of her abnormal companion, she comes to wonder about her own identity.

Touch on Japan

Japan, 2006, DVD, 9 min.

First-class creators of TV commercials showcase creative images of modern Japan with a cool beat, including current fashion of the youth, the world of animation, and a young kabuki actor who appeals to all generations.

The Straight and the Narrow

France, 2004, DVD, 12 min., Director: Mathias Gokalp

A 25-year-old prisoner recalls the story of his life, confusing its beginning with its end.

Aulnay Need is Love

France, 2001, DVD, 12 min., Director: Fodil Chabbi

Max, a young man from Aulnay-sous-Bois in the Paris suburbs, meets Julie, a young woman from the south of France. The film reveals how they negotiate between the fear of social difference and their love for each other.

Speakers will include Hidehiro Waki, Syracuse University student

RSVP to jiccrsvpspring06@embjapan.org or 202-238-6901

Monday, June 26, 6:30 pm

The Alliance Francaise
2142 Wyoming Avenue NW
FRANCE AND KOREA

Alice and I

Belgium/France, 2004, DVD, 19 min., Director: Micha Wald

Simon is charged with driving his aunt Mala and her friends Lydia and Colette to the beach. He starts arguing with his girlfriend Alice over the phone while driving. The three women slowly but surely interfere...

The French Democracy

France, 2005, DVD, 13 min., Director: Koulamata

This personal perspective on the 2005 riots in France and their origins is directed in a video-game anime style by a young man from the Paris suburbs.

Oh! Beautiful Life

Korea, 2003, DVD, 16 min., Director: Kim In-suk

In a job interview Eun-suk gives a rap performance narrating the story of her life. The young girl's splendid rapping makes her life seem great, but there is a bitter reality beyond the show...

Shave

Korea, 2003, DVD, 33 min., Director: Shin Su-won

16-year-old Hyung-jun, son of a poor, unemployed father, suffers threats from his classmates. When he finds an old 8mm camcorder his teacher used to monitor students, it's his turn to record.

Speakers will include John Feffer, Author of *North Korea/South Korea*

RSVP to 202-234-7911

Tuesday, June 27, 6:30 pm

The Istituto Italiano
2025 M Street NW
CHINA AND ITALY

A Tale of Two Chinese

China, 2005, 28 min. Director: Wei Dajun

This film depicts two ordinary Chinese, living in Beijing and Ningxia Autonomous Regions. One practices the violin while peddling newspapers; the other works on successfully producing an aircraft.

Die for Me

Italy, 2002, Mini DV, 12 min., Director: Anna de Manincor

“For many years I have asked myself if my guilty conscience with regards to my friends was due to the fact that I didn’t love them in a disinterested manner.” A passionate story told through a mute, black screen.

Speakers to be confirmed.

RSVP to 202-223-9800

Thursday, June 29, 6:30 pm

Goethe-Institut

812 Seventh Street NW

ALL COUNTRIES

Japanese Youth: My Dream

Japan, VHS, 17 min., presented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

This film presents the daily life of a Japanese high school student. It leads the viewer to contemplate the motivations and dreams of Japanese youth.

The “Weight” of Her

Korea, 2003, 35mm, 20 min., Director: YIM Soon-rye

An episode from a special omnibus film (*If You Were Me*) that deals with human rights issues, *The “Weight” of Her* describes how high school girls feel compelled to undergo plastic surgery in order to find work.

A Simple Step

France, 2005, BETA, 10 min., Director: Eugenie Bourdeau

Audrey prepares to throw herself from a high bridge into the emptiness below. As she readies herself, her mind is flooded with memories: her mother’s tears, her father’s departure, and the death of her younger brother.

The Eyes of Johnny Depp (Die Augen von Johnny Depp)

Germany, 2004, Mini DV, 12 min., Director: Alexander Hörbe

An old love, a new love, a betrayal and a lucky lottery ticket surround this compelling love triangle.

CHINESE FILM TO BE DETERMINED

Oltre S.P.A. or Ti aspettavo compagno

Italy

A discussion entitled “**Coming of Age in a Shifting World: Youth Culture of Rebellion and Conformity in East Asia and Europe**” will take place on the final evening.

Speakers will include: Emanuel Pastreich, Adjunct Professor, George Washington University & Editor-in-Chief, Dynamic Korea; Hyunjun Min, Comparative Literature/Film Studies, University of Maryland

Reception to follow.

RSVP to 202-289-1200 ext. 169

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