

INTER-ASIA CULTURAL STUDIES

SPECIAL ISSUE: Asia's Hou Hsiao-Hsien – Cinema, History and Culture

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Guest Editors: **Ti WEI** and **Paul Willeman**

In April 2005, the Singapore International Film Festival featured a 'Hou Hsiao-Hsien Retrospective' to honor his long-term contribution to world cinema. In that context, through the support of the Asia Research Institute, the National University of Singapore and the Singapore History Museum, an international conference was organized in April 2008 entitled 'Asia's Hou Hsiao-Hsien – Cinema, History and Culture'.

Hou Hsiao-Hsien is no doubt one of the Asian film-makers whose work deserves serious treatment. But how to critically situate his work is a challenge. In working with Hou to organize the conference, to watch his films during the Festival, to listen to his presentations, and when interviewing him, the editors have come to realize that Hou's cinematic production cannot be examined productively within the boundary of film history. Rather it can be perhaps better understood as a complex result of, and interplay with, what they would call a modern Chinese critical intellectual tradition. In their conversations with Hou, rendered in the form of an interview at the end of this special issue, one thing that emerged most vividly was his sense of a film industry as a strategic site. As an industrial as well as a cultural apparatus, a cinema imagined in terms of a broad 'greater China' frame includes, for example, Singapore and Malaysia, that could provide a space where the most stifling aspects of Hollywood's bid for dominance may be mitigated.

The papers about the films of Hou Hsiao-Hsien have been gathered not only to underline the singular value of his work, nor simply to attempt to produce an understanding of the ways in which his work 'works'. It is the editors' intention that these papers also should raise a number of questions about the very procedures through which film artists today seek to modulate the aesthetic differentiation-cancellation process to convey their grasp of what cinema has to do, and has to be seen doing, if some sense is to be made cinematically of our thoroughly but always peculiarly varied forms of socialized individuation.

This special issue includes revised and translated versions of papers presented at the conference and is dedicated to Hou Hsiao-Hsien for his 60th birthday.

Selection of Articles

The eloquence of the taciturn: an essay on Hou Hsiao-Hsien
Shigehiko HASUMI

Hou Hsiao-Hsien: a standard for evaluating Taiwan's cinema
WEN Tien-Hsiang (Translated by **GAN Sheuo Hui**)

Hou Hsiao-Hsien's films: pursuing and escaping history
DAI Jinhua (Translated by **Zhang Jingyuan**)

Hou Hsiao-Hsien's two dreams of light and shadows
WONG Ain-ling (Translated by **Jacob WONG**)

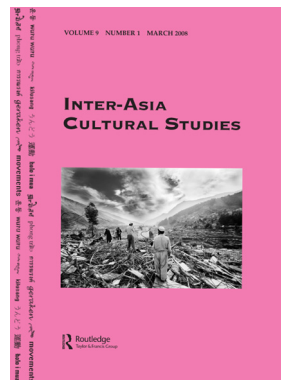
What's happening? Story, scene and sound in Hou Hsiao-Hsien
Adrian MARTIN

Visual Essay

The qipao, the Western dress and the Taiwanese shan: images from 100 years of Taiwanese clothing
CHENG Hong-sheng (Translated by **JIANG Yajiao**)

Political participation in 2004: an interview with Hou Hsiao-Hsien
CHEN Kuan-Hsing and **Ti WEI** (Translated by **Ken-fang LEE**)

Hou Hsiao-Hsien's filmography



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Kuan-Hsing CHEN and
CHUA Beng Huat

Aims and Scope:

The cultural question is among the most important yet difficult subject facing inter-Asia today. Throughout the 20th century, worldwide competition over capital, colonial history, and the Cold War has jeopardized interactions among cultures. Globalization of technology, regionalization of economy and the end of the Cold War have opened up a unique opportunity for cultural exchanges to take place. In response to global cultural changes, cultural studies has emerged internationally as an energetic field of scholarship.

Inter-Asia Cultural Studies gives a long overdue voice, throughout the global intellectual community, to those concerned with inter-Asia processes. *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* includes discussion, reports and analysis from global critical circles, and especially from marginalised sites, with the aim of enhancing the communication and exchange between inter-Asia and other regions of the cultural studies world.

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