

East Asian Film Series

Night Market Hero

Public Screening

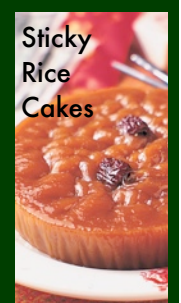
Sponsored by the Taiwan Academy and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston



On a pleasant Sunday afternoon, October 28th, 2012, the East Asia Institute (EAI) hosted a public viewing of the movie "Night Market Hero." The screening was co-sponsored by the Taiwan Academy and the Cultural Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Houston. The screening began at 2:00 p.m. and was attended by over 50 guests. This event was another installment of the East Asia Institute's Asian Film Series and EAI was able to get the production company, Green Film, to waive screening charges to the film.

The movie follows union leader Ah Hua, who presides over the bustling 888 Night Market with the help of his friend Seven and a dazzling array of characters, including the voluptuous Ms. Luffa, the Happy Chicken Fillet Lady, and the vain Mrs. Steak with her boyfriend Bingo King, as well as the numerous owners who operate the stalls. Between presiding over spats both silly and serious, Ah Hua spends his days taking care of his fragile grandmother and stirring up a little good-natured trouble with visiting journalist Yi-nan. However, after a corrupt city councilman sells the market to real estate developers

and some helmet-clad thugs shower the stalls with Roman Candles, Ah Hua and Yi-nan must join together to fight for the merchants whose hard work makes the night market thrive.





Panel discussion on Contemporary Taiwanese Society and Culture



Taiwanese food tasting

A short presentation on Taiwan's history, geography, culture and food was made by Wen-Jiao Duan, a visiting Chinese language professor from the University of the Incarnate Word. Following the presentation, a panel discussion was moderated by Mimi Yu, Associate Director of the East Asia Institute. The panelists, Dr. Hung-Da Wan, Assistant Professor of the College of Engineering; Yi-ching Liao, a recent UTSA graduate from Taiwan who just received her master's degree in Mechanical Engineering; and Wen-Jiao Duan were available to take questions and open up meaningful dialogues.

Wan told the attendees that he reminisced about Taiwanese food during the movie. Following this, Duan described the differences between American and Taiwanese soups and food. In addition, Liao talked about the local food culture from Tainan, a city located in southern Taiwan, which is full of historical buildings and cultural sites left by the Dutch in the 17th century, back when Taiwan was colonized by Holland. The panelists all highly recommended the audience to visit the night markets in Taiwan and tour around various parts

of the island to experience its local food and culture. The audience also asked many questions, and some even chimed in with their own experience and observations of Taiwan, which made the panel discussion very interactive.

After the panel discussion, the East Asia Institute prepared five Taiwanese dishes for the audience to enjoy. The dishes were catered by Gin's Chinese Restaurant in San Antonio, and were sponsored and provided by TECO. There were two chicken dishes: the first one was pepper-salted chicken, and the second one was soy sauce chicken wings and drumsticks. In addition, there was bean curd served with carrots with fried rice noodles. Another interesting dish was the braised Eggs. Despite the black coloring of the egg due to being cooking in soy sauce and a variety of spices, it was actually quite enjoyable.

The guests seemed quite pleased with the movie selection. Many positive praises could be overheard. "I really enjoyed the movie!" Joshua Mensah declared. "For a comedy, it really sent me on an emotional journey towards the end."



Participants enjoy the Taiwanese food

Robert Lethins, who is studying Japanese at UTSA, said "I learned so much about the night market culture in Taiwan and would like to experience that myself first hand someday. Wouldn't it be nice if we had night markets in the U.S., too?"

Night Market Hero tells about the contemporary society of Taiwan and the working class. It also gives viewers a sneak peek into how the local government and business unions work. The purpose of this film screening was to help the American audience have a better understanding of Taiwan, and the East Asia Institute hopes to stimulate further conversation and cultural exchange through similar events in the future.