On Monday, March 17, 2014, the East Asia Institute (EAI) with the generous grant from Houston’s Taiwanese Academy hosted the second installment of the Ang Lee Film Festival with a showing of the movie entitled The Wedding Banquet attended by 30 people.

The Wedding Banquet is about a gay New Yorker who stages a marriage of convenience with a young woman to satisfy his traditional Taiwanese family, but the wedding becomes a major inconvenience when his parents fly in for the ceremony. Wai-Tung Gao, has never shared the truth about his sexuality with his family, and hopes to disguise his long-term relationship with his lover Simon by marrying Wei-Wei, a young artist who is only in it for the green card. However, Wai-Tung’s parents refuse to let him off the hook easily, showing up to plan a massive wedding banquet.

Following the movie, there was a round table discussion led by Mimi Yu, Associate Director of UTSA’s East Asia Institute. The discussion focused on several aspects of the Taiwanese culture and family life such as the important role the parents play in the family. In addition, the guests were given oranges to enjoy during and after the screening. After all ‘orange’ in the Chinese language has a very similar pronunciation to the word ‘luck.’

The audience was deeply engaged in the discussion, with each member voicing their thoughts and opinions on either the topic at hand, or even the film itself. “The aspect of Confucianism is pretty big in traditional Taiwanese culture. I think that Ang Lee used this while directing scenes with the father,” one audience member pointed out. “Almost every time the father was on the screen, he would be in the middle and in a higher position. During the dinners, for example, the father will always be at the top, with the family tiered below him.”

Many patrons exclaimed their joy for this movie and cannot wait for the next installment.

The next movie of the Ang Lee Film Series will be on April 10th, 2014. The EAI will be showing Eat Drink, Man Woman, and it will be the final film of the festival, with a lecture to led by Dr. Jie Zhang, Professor of Chinese of Trinity University.