
For immediate release,
(21 April - 6 May 2018)

JEAN ROUCH: The First Hong Kong Retrospective

“Modern Cinema starts when Jean Rouch’s tripod fell into the Niger river”

Jean-Luc Godard

For the first time ever in Hong Kong, THY LAB, in partnership with the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, with the support of Institut Français – Cinémathèque Afrique, is proud to present a Retrospective on the movies of the renowned French filmmaker Jean Rouch, considered unanimously as the father of the French New Wave as well as of “Cinéma Vérité”.

Seven of Jean Rouch’s films will be shown, from 21 April to 6 May 2018 to celebrate the centennial of the filmmaker’s birth. After the screenings, THYLAB will invite special guests including Jean Rouch’s wife, Jacelyne Rouch, and the head of International Organisation of Migration sub-office in Hong Kong, Nurul Qoiriah, who will share few words regarding Rouch’s contributions to the world of ethnographic cinema.

With a repertoire of over a hundred films, Jean Rouch is considered as the main pioneer of visual anthropology- and the father of ethnofiction, combining the art of filmmaking with the science of anthropology. Rouch’s unique method documents people’s life and brings their narratives to an otherwise unreachable audience. Leaving behind his career as an engineer, Rouch began to make films to record the lives and culture of the people of Niger River valley in the late 1940s and 1950s. He made waves in the fields of cinema and social anthropology by allowing his subjects to take part in the writing and production of his films, offering them a platform to voice their own stories in their own way. Rather than seeing natives through the eyes of the West, his films gave peoples a way to represent themselves in the era of colonialism.

In collaboration with IOM, THY LAB is working on its own ethnographic film on the lives and struggles of Indonesian domestic workers in Hong Kong. Inspired by Rouch’s methodology, the project aims to empower domestic workers by working with them to write and present their stories. With over 350 000 domestic workers in the city, they account for up to 60% of Hong Kong’s non-Chinese population. However, they lack representation in local mainstream media. Through this project, THY LAB hopes to give them a platform to share their experiences and pains of working in a foreign city, and thus show the people of Hong Kong the invisible side of their lives.

The screenings include the most famous works from the filmmaker, and the most characteristic of ethnographic cinema.

[More about the films and screenings](#)

In French with English subtitles.

MOI, UN NOIR (1959)

Set in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, the film follows the lives of immigrants over the course of one week as they search for jobs and fantasise about better lives.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12nq75j-dqw>

Date: 21 April 2018 (Saturday)

Time: 16:00

Venue: THY LAB, Room 2217, Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wan Chai

LA PYRAMIDE HUMAINE/ HUMAN PYRAMID (1961)

A new student arrives in school and exposes the difficulties of interracial relations.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UfM9zzymdEs>

Date: 22 April 2018 (Sunday)

Time: 16:00

Venue: THY LAB, Room 2217, Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wan Chai

CHRONIQUE D'UN ETE/ CHRONICLE OF A SUMMER (1961)

Real life individuals discuss topics on the themes of society and happiness in the French working class.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pxk-fg771r8>

Date: 23 April 2018 (Monday)

Time: 18:30

Venue: Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, 25/F, Admiralty Center Tower 2, 18 Harcourt Road, Admiralty

JAGUAR (1967)

Three young men from Niger look for work and experience in Ghana's cities.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHMBj393nN0>

Date: 24 April 2018 (Tuesday)

Time: to be confirmed

Venue: Chinese University of Hong Kong

PETIT A PETIT/ LITTLE BY LITTLE (1969)

Wishing to build a grand building in his little village, a young man from Niger visits Paris to see how it is done and gets a taste of the Parisian lifestyle.

Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofX90vYI0jk>

Date: 25 April 2018 (Wednesday)

Time: 18:30

Venue: Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau, 25/F, Admiralty Center Tower 2, 18 Harcourt Road, Admiralty

COCORICO MONSIEUR POULET (1975)

Three poultry sellers take a trip across the bush and encounter an array of obstacles.

Trailer: <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x28fcaa>

Date: 29 April 2018 (Sunday)

Time: 16:00

Venue: THY LAB, Room 2217, Shui On Centre, 6-8 Harbour Road, Wan Chai

BRISE GLACE (1987)

Three filmmakers sail aboard a Swedish icebreaker and express their unique perspectives of life on board.

Film description: <https://www.unifrance.org/film/34877/brise-glace>

Date: 6 May 2018 (Sunday)

Time: 17:00

Venue: surprise venue

Organised by THY LAB

In partnership with:

Fondation Jean Rouch;
the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau;
Institut Français -Cinémathèque Afrique;
the International Organization for Migration (IOM);
Department of Anthropology, Chinese University of Hong Kong

About THY LAB

THY LAB, located in Sham Shui Po, Kowloon, is an audiovisual research laboratory. The team has been working on ethnographic filmmaking internationally, as well as training youth in filmmaking. Our team has produced about 100 films in more than 30 different European and Asian countries.



Fondation Jean Rouch

Established in 2006, Fondation Jean Rouch aims to promote the work of Jean Rouch by initiating and supporting research, publications, screenings and other events related to his work. The Foundation also contributes to the developmental actions of Niger and Mali, two African countries dear to Rouch himself. It supports the African Documentary Film Forum, and annual film festival held in Niger and weekly events promoting ethnographic film.



Consulate General of France in Hong Kong and Macau

The mission of the audiovisual department at the Consulate General of France in Hong Kong & Macau is to assist projects and initiatives in French film distribution, television and radio programmes, music as well as video games release. The department is dedicated to help professionals (distributors, festival organisers, media, teachers and students, journalists and artists) on their French audiovisual-related projects including distribution and transatlantic projects. The cultural service also promotes cultural diversity with their partners by acting as a liaison for the co-production and distribution of Hong Kong audiovisual work in France.



Institut Français -Cinémathèque Afrique

With responsibility for the preservation and distribution of Africa's heritage cinema, the Institut Français holds one of the largest collections of African films from the 60s to today. Created in 1961 by the Ministry of Cooperation, the African Film Library contributes to the promotion of African cinema throughout the world and makes available to professionals and programmers a catalogue of over 1,500 titles, over 700 of which are free of royalties and available for non-commercial distribution.



International Organization for Migration

In partnership with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) aims to promote humane and orderly migration by providing services and advice to governments and migrants. It aims to promote international cooperation, to search for solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian aid to migrants in need. IOM works in areas such as law and policy, migrants rights, health, and gender issues.



Department of Anthropology, Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Chinese University of Hong Kong's Department of Anthropology promotes the study of culture and identity with a special focus on issues of ethnic, regional, and national identity in South China, Hong Kong Taiwan, and East and Southeast Asia. Students study and research areas such as gender identity, ethnicity, economic development, and food culture.



DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG