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## WEXNER CENTER PRESENTS 3RD ANNUAL COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL

### *FOUR-DAY FESTIVAL INCLUDES AREA PREMIERES, ICE CREAM SOCIAL, MORE*

Featuring four days of films, the Wexner Center's third annual **Columbus International Children's Film Festival** unspools at the Wexner Center **November 30—December 2**. This festival—the only one of its kind in the greater Columbus area—is devoted to critically acclaimed international films for family audiences. This year's featured films come from such countries as Brazil, Mongolia, the Netherlands, and includes the U.S.



From *Mongolian Ping Pong* / Image courtesy First Run Features

premiere of China's *The Story of Xiaoyan*; the Columbus premiere of *Mongolian Ping Pong*; and *Porco Rosso*, a classic animated work from Japan's Hayao Miyazaki. A **discussion guide** for families will be distributed at the festival. In between films on Saturday and Sunday, families can take part in free self-guided **art projects** or join a **tour** of one the Wexner Center exhibitions *Shiny* (tours held Saturday at 11:30 am and Sunday at 12:30 pm). On Sunday at 2:30 pm, families can enjoy an **ice cream social** with ice cream provided by Jeni's Ice Cream. Visitors can also browse the children's section of the Wexner Center Store. All weekend long, **videos created by young people** from some of the Wexner Center's summer workshops will screen in the center's video space The Box, and the café will be serving **family-friendly snacks**.

Kendra Meyer, co-organizer of the event and the Wexner Center's educator for youth programs, says, "It's always a pleasure to offer this festival to the city. This is a fantastic way to introduce children to the concerns and experiences of children from around the world, and we hope it encourages an ongoing interest both in other cultures and in innovative films."

Notes Chris Stults, co-organizer of the festival and an assistant curator in Wexner Center's film department, "This year's festival is the most ambitious one yet, with a fuller schedule, more premieres, and more activities for families. This event represents the very best in contemporary international and classical cinema for children, and is the only place in town kids can see these types of films in a movie theater."

**TICKETS and VISITOR INFORMATION:** Tickets for each individual film are \$3 for the general public and \$2 for members, available at the door or in advance at 614 292-3535. **Packages of any six tickets** are \$15 for the general public and \$10 for members. Tickets go on sale to the public November 5. The Wexner Center is located at 1871 N. High St. at 15<sup>th</sup> Ave. at The Ohio State University (wexarts.org); the public can call 614 292-3535 or stop into the Wexner Center for advance tickets. **Note:** The public can call Kendra Meyer, educator for youth programs, at 614 292-4614 to discuss any film before viewing it with children.

### **THE SCHEDULE:**

*Age ranges listed are recommendations only.*

#### **THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30 / 7 pm**

*U.S. premiere*

***The Story of Xiaoyan*** (Fang Gangliang, China, 2005)

The charming and moving Chinese film *The Story of Xiaoyan*, making its U.S. premiere at this festival, has been setting box office records around the world. It tells the story of a young girl who spends her summer vacation carrying out various difficult and imaginative schemes to earn the money that would allow her to continue attending school. The Sprockets Film Festival for Children says about the film: "Xiaoyan's experiences seem at first specific to her culture but are, in fact, profoundly universal, as her struggles and triumphs prove that one individual (even one with pigtails) can change traditions of a thousand years through brains, desire and sheer will." Subtitles will be read aloud. Recommended for ages 8 and up (35mm, 102 mins.).

#### **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 1 / 7 pm**

***Porco Rosso*** (*The Crimson Pig*) (Hayao Miyazaki, Japan, 1992)

From Hayao Miyazaki, the acclaimed animator of *Spirited Away* and *My Neighbor Totoro*, comes a rarely seen classic, *Porco Rosso*. Set in Italy during the 1930s, the film follows the high flying adventures of Marco, a pig who is a renegade ace pilot with a fondness for beaches and old French songs. After rescuing his 17-year-old tomboyish mechanic Fio from a band of air pirates, Marco finds himself being pursued by the fascist Italian police and an egotistical American flying ace. Miyazaki's films are known for their fascination with flight and *Porco Rosso* features some of the most thrilling aerial scenes ever drawn! *Porco Rosso* is presented in a new English language version with Michael Keaton as the voice of Marco. Rated PG for violence and some mild language. Recommended for ages 9 and up (35mm, 93 mins.).

#### **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2**

**10:30 am:**

**UPA Cartoons**

This program of Saturday morning cartoons is a rare treat for all ages. Although the name UPA (United Productions of America) might not be as synonymous with Hollywood animation as Disney or Warner Bros., the studio produced some of the most stylish and influential cartoons of its era. This program features some of the studio's best-loved cartoons including *Gerald McBoing-Boing* (1951), *Madeline* (1952), and *Spellbound Hound* (1950), which features UPA's biggest star, Mr. Magoo. Recommended for ages 4 and up (35mm, app. 50 mins.).

**Noon:**

*Ohio premiere*

***Lepel*** (Willem van de Sande Bakhuyzen, Netherlands, 2005)

Lepel is a 9-year-old boy who is waiting for his missing parents to return from their hot-air balloon trip around the world. Meanwhile, his mean grandmother uses him as a servant, involving him in her schemes. One day, Lepel finds a moment to escape from her among the bustle of a department store and finds a new friend, Pleun, who secretly resides behind a tie rack. Hilarious and heartbreaking, the film follows the two

children as they search for Lepel's parents and find the unexpected. Recommended for ages 6 and up (35mm, 96 mins.).

**2 pm:**

*Midwest premiere*

***Eve and the Fire Horse*** (Julia Kwan, Canada, 2005)

Eve, a precocious 9-year old with an overactive imagination, was born in the year of the Fire Horse, notorious among Chinese families for producing the most troublesome children. Caught between her older sister's fantasies of sainthood and cultural confusion and her own sense of right and wrong, Eve faces the challenges of childhood with fanciful humor and wide-eyed wonder. Set in 1970s Vancouver, this Sundance Special Jury Prize Winner is an enlightening look at cultural and religious clashes. Recommended for ages 9 and up (35mm, 92 mins.).



From *Eve and the Fire Horse* / Photo by Chris Helcermanas-Benge

**4 pm (also showing Sunday at 3:30 pm):**

*Columbus premiere*

***Mongolian Ping Pong*** (Ning Hao, Mongolia, 2005)

"A nice change of pace from the noise and cynicism of so many American films aimed at underage audiences." –*The New York Times*

One of the most delightful and visually beautiful films you're likely to see all year, *Mongolian Ping Pong* shows how the daily life of a 7-year-old Mongolian boy becomes full of wonder when a mysterious tiny white ping-pong ball is found floating in a stream. The majestic, remote grasslands of Mongolia provide a magnificent landscape that has changed little since the time of Genghis Khan and, so far removed from the modern world, children have to play with whatever they have at hand and even the smallest discovery can be a big event. The boy thinks the ping-pong ball is a "glowing pearl" and sets out to discover its purpose, leading him on a journey full of humor and wonder. Subtitles will be read aloud. Recommended for ages 9 and up (35mm, 102 mins.).

**7 pm:**

***Modern Times*** (Charles Chaplin, U.S., 1936)

Charlie Chaplin's character The Little Tramp is one of the most famous and beloved figures in movie history, and *Modern Times*, the Tramp's last screen appearance, features some of Chaplin's most inspired comedic scenarios, most notably the during the Tramp's brief stint at a factory job (complete with a "feeding machine" designed to make efficient use of his lunch hour). Special for the way the movie mixes techniques from both silent and sound movies, *Modern Times* humorously examines the challenges of "the little man" during the machine age. The film also features the first time Chaplin's voice was ever heard in a movie theater—singing a song in a gibberish language with wonderfully nonsensical lyrics. Recommended for ages 6 and up (35mm, 87 mins.).

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3**

**1 pm:**

*Ohio premiere*

***Tainá: An Amazon Adventure*** (Sérgio Bloch, Tania Lamarca, Brazil, 2001)

Preceded by *Journey to Mars* (Juan Pablo Zaramella, Argentina, 2005)

**Free**; tickets can be picked up on the day of the screening.



From *Journey to Mars*

Our free screening of the lively *Tainá* will give audiences the chance to have a short tropical vacation before the start of another Midwestern winter. Full of luscious photography in Brazil's Amazon jungle, the film follows the adventures of a good-hearted Indian girl, Tainá, and her pet monkey as they try to save several endangered species from bumbling trappers. The fast-moving storyline and slapstick action makes plenty of time to show the colorful

wildlife that can be found crawling, flying and scurrying in the jungle setting (35mm, 91 mins.). The delightful animated short film *Journey to Mars* tells a boy's unbelievable tale of traveling to Mars in his grandfather's tow truck (35mm, 16 mins.). Recommended for ages 6 and up.

**2:30–3:30 pm:**

**Ice Cream Social  
with Jeni's Ice Cream**

Between screenings on Sunday, join us for an ice cream social featuring Jeni's Ice Cream, a Columbus favorite.



**3:30 pm:**

***Mongolian Ping Pong*** (Ning Hao, Mongolia, 2005)  
(see Saturday listing for description)

**SEASON SUPPORT**

Major support for the film/video season generously provided by Abercrombie & Fitch and Mills James Productions.

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Community partner for this festival: Jeni's Ice Creams.

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