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WEXNER CENTER SHOWCASES FILMS OF THAI MAVERICK APICHATPONG WEERASETHAKUL

SERIES FEATURES A Q & A SESSION WITH WEERASETHAKUL

**"...directors aren't making Apichatpong Weerasethakul's kind of films anywhere."—
Mark Peranson, *Toronto Globe & Mail***

In one of the year's major film events, the Wexner Center showcases the work of award-winning Thai director **Apichatpong Weerasethakul** (nicknamed "Joe"). Weerasethakul **will visit in November** to introduce and discuss a public screening of his latest film, *Tropical Malady*, which won the Cannes Jury Prize this year. Weerasethakul is also a 2004–05 Residency Award recipient in media arts.

Still in his early 30s, Joe has quickly become one of global cinema's most dazzling discoveries. Two of his three feature-length films have won top prizes at Cannes, an accomplishment all the more remarkable in light of their highly experimental nature. Joe's films are renowned for their surreal, sensual quality, and for provocatively blending documentary with fiction. The films often utilize non-professional actors and non-linear storylines.

Bill Horrigan, curator of media arts at the Wexner Center, says of Weerasethakul and his work: "Joe's first two films were unlike anything else we'd seen. The Wexner Center's film program puts a high priority on bringing international artists and projects for our audiences to experience first-hand, and we're committed to non-traditional works—film and video that push the boundaries in various ways. Joe exemplifies those values; we're thrilled he'll be able to be here to introduce his work."

Born in northeast Thailand and educated in film at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago, Joe is deeply engaged with contemporary Thailand. He co-founded Bangkok-based production company Kick the Machine, an artist-run center for young filmmakers. Weerasethakul lives in Bangkok.

This series is organized by Horrigan and Chris Stults, curatorial assistant in the media arts department.

For more information on Weerasethakul: www.kickthemachine.com.

Tickets for each evening of the series are \$6 for the general public, \$4 for Wexner Center members, students, and senior citizens. All screenings take place in the Wexner Center Film/Video Theater, 1871 N. High St. Call 614-292-3535 for advance tickets. The schedule follows.

Friday, November 12 / 7 pm / 2nd feature 9:20 pm

Local premieres

Blissfully Yours (2002)

Mysterious Object at Noon (2000)

Inspired by an incident in which Joe witnessed two illegal teenage immigrants arrested, his second feature the disarming *Blissfully Yours* (125 mins.) is set in a small town near the Burmese border, where a young woman plans a romantic day with her illegal immigrant boyfriend. The couple is joined by another woman when they take a pleasure trip into the jungle. *Chicago Tribune* film critic Michael Wilmington called the film “heatedly lyrical, boldly sexual and droll: a triumphant dramatic feature debut.”

Inimitably mixing fact with fiction, *Mysterious Object at Noon* (85 mins.) confronts everyday people in Bangkok willing to reveal themselves for the camera—street vendors, grandparents, video-game-obsessed school kids—who contribute to the film’s overarching story about a paraplegic boy and his tutor. Through this “exquisite corpse” technique (a Surrealist style based on a collage of images and words) and by direct involvement in the production of different ethnic and social groups, the film recycles rural and urban folklores to produce a pleasurable, startling motion picture experience.

Saturday, November 13 / 7 pm

Regional premiere

Tropical Malady (2004)

Introduced by the director

Q & A session with Joe after the screening

When *Tropical Malady* (118 mins.) debuted at Cannes, *Film Comment* critic Kent Jones wrote that “it provided...competition with its most rarefied and ravishing experience.” It explores the passionate relationship between two men, telling two stories to do so. The first story focuses on a soldier attracted to a villager, who works in an ice-cutting plant. As their romance is about to peak, the second story is launched: the soldier is ordered to the jungle to track an unseen beast thought to be preying on livestock. The shocking tonal shifts create a haunting ghost story that received the Jury Prize at this year’s Cannes film festival. Cannes Jury president Quentin Tarantino said the film affected jury members “profoundly...to a staggering degree.”

EVENT SUPPORT

Apichatong Weerasethakul's artist residency is presented with support from the **National Endowment for the Arts, Ohio Arts Council**, and the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center** Foundation.

The 2004–05 film/video season is presented with support from the **Rohauer Collection Foundation** and the **Corporate Annual Fund of the Wexner Center** Foundation.

WEXNER CENTER

The Wexner Center for the Arts is The Ohio State University's multidisciplinary, international laboratory for the exploration and advancement of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, screenings, performances, artist residencies, and educational programs, the Wexner Center acts as a forum where established and emerging artists can test ideas and where diverse audiences can participate in cultural experiences that enhance understanding of the art of our time. In its programs, the Wexner Center balances a commitment to experimentation with a commitment to traditions of innovation and affirms the university's mission of education, research, and community service.

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