

ERIC KHOO BIOGRAPHY

Director / Producer

Eric Khoo put Singapore on the international film map with his first feature film “Mee Pok Man” (1995), picking up prizes at Fukuoka, Pusan and Singapore. His second feature “12 Storeys” (1997) won the Federation of International Film Critics (FIPRESCI) Award and the UOB Young Cinema Award at the 10th Singapore International Festival, and the Golden Maile Award for Best Picture at the 17th Hawaii International Film Festival. More importantly “12 Storeys” was the first Singaporean film to be invited officially to participate in the 50th Cannes Film Festival (1997).

Mee Pok Man and 12 Storeys have together been screened at over 60 film festivals, held all over the world including Ivy League festivals such as Venice, Berlin and Rotterdam.

In 1998, Eric Khoo was ranked as one of the 25 exceptional trend makers of Asia by Asiaweek magazine and in the following year was included into Asiaweek’s leaders for the millenium issue. He was an Executive Producer for the local comedy hit, “Liang Po Po – The Movie” (1999), and “One Leg Kicking” (2001), which were both the highest grossing local movies for their respective years in Singapore. He also produced “15” (2003) directed by Royston Tan, which has been invited to the Venice Film Festival (2003) and Sundance (2004). His TV work includes being Executive Producer of “DRIVE”, an anthology series for the Television Corporation of Singapore (1998), and “Seventh Month” (2004), a highly acclaimed TV horror series for Channel U (SPH Mediaworks). These productions served as a platform for grooming young talented filmmakers.

Some of his notable achievements include being the first recipient of the National Arts Councils Young Artist Award for Film in 1997. Eric was conferred the Singapore Youth Awards (Individual) in 1999 for his dedication to film-making and contributions to society.

In 2004 Eric directed his third feature Be With Me which was selected as the opening film for the Directors’ Fortnight Cannes 2005. The film has since won several awards overseas and has been invited to the Toronto International Film Festival, Telluride Film Festival, Pusan International Film Festival amongst others. It has also received international distribution including the US and Europe with glowing reviews in the French media when it opened in October 2005.

Eric was a judge at the 10th Pusan International Film Festival 2005 and Be With Me is the first Singaporean film to be nominated for the European Film Awards 2005. In 2006 Eric executive produced Royston Tan’s second feature “4:30” and was invited to direct for the Jeonju Digital Film Festival in Korea - “No Day Off” the story of an Indonesian maid. He was awarded the 2006 Singapore Youth Awards Medal Of Commendation and he was the first Singapore director whose films were featured in a retrospective in Korea. The Seoul Independent Film Festival paid this tribute to him.

Since 2007, Eric has been appointed as a board member of the Media Development Authority (MDA) and the NYU Tisch School of the Arts Asia. He produced Royston Tan’s “881” a box office hit and received the highest arts honor the Cultural Medallion by the President of Singapore in the same year. In 2008, Eric was awarded the (chevalier de l’ordre des arts et des lettres) from the French Minister of Culture. His latest feature film, “My Magic” is selected for Cannes official selection main competition. It will be distributed in France by ARP and Wild bunch for international sales.

FILMOGRAPHY

Short Films

Barbie Digs Joe (1990)
August (1991)
Carcass (1992)
Symphony 92.4 Fm (1993)
Pain (1994)
Home Vdo (2000)
No Day Off (2006)

Feature Films

Mee Pok Man (1995) Director
12 Storeys (1997) Director
Liang Po Po – The Movie (1999) Executive Producer
Stories About Love (2000) Producer
One Leg Kicking (2001) Executive Producer
15 (2003) Producer
Zombie Dogs (2004) Producer
Be With Me (2005) Director
4:30 (2006) Producer
881 (2007) Producer
My Magic (2008) Director

Television Series

Drive (1998) Executive Producer
We Do (2001) Executive Producer
Home Coming (2003) Executive Producer
7th Month (2004) Executive Producer





MEE POK MAN

Synopsis

Lonely, misunderstood and ridiculed, the mee pok man runs an all-night fish-ball noodle stall in a notorious part of Singapore. His patrons are denizens of the night, a motley assortment of characters from the seamier side of life.

Among them is Bunny, a disillusioned prostitute who is controlled by villainous pimp, Mike Kor (Lim Kay Tong) and his band of hoodlums. Bunny dreams often of escaping her dreary existence and pins her hopes on her sleazy English boyfriend, Jonathan Reese (David Brazil).

Unknown to Bunny, the mee pok man is obsessed with her. He sees her as a fragile angel whom he must rescue from the muck and filth she is mired in. An accident brings them together. But just as the two lonely souls begin to connect, Fate intervenes and deals them a cruel hand.

Cheated of his happiness, the mee pok man rejects society and dives headlong into a relationship that is at once touching as it is bizarre.

MEE POK MAN REVIEW

Eric Khoo makes an impressive directorial debut.- EMANUEL LEVY, VARIETY Magazine

One can only hope for more discoveries like Eric Khoo HOWARD FEINSTEIN, TIME OUT Magazine

A bold first feature that succeeds in vividly portraying a slice of Singapore life THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FILM CRITICS (FIPRESCI)

... For an idea of the good things that may be in store for Singapore's nascent film industry, check out Eric Khoo's Mee Pok Man. This well-crafted story about a prostitute and slow-witted noodle seller packs a big wallop ASIAWEEK Magazine

Eric Khoo has all the makings of a wonderful film maker JOHN ANDERSON, NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE

An excellent film, Mee Pok man provides rich and satisfying food for thought MICHAEL SOUTHWELL, THE NEW PAPER

A vibrant, punchy, sometimes moving street film. The characters are memorable, the sense of place pungent and colorful. MICHAEL WILMINGTON, THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE

It's a great breakthrough DEREK MALCOLM, CHIEF FILM CRITIC OF THE GUARDIAN

An often striking mind fuck GARRY DAUPHIN, THE VILLAGE VOICE

An Asian Taxi Driver, Khoo's debut feature may become as significant as Martin Scorsese's Mean Streets TIM ADLER, MOVING PICTURES

The strengths of the performances and visuals keep the level of interest high. Mee Pok Man is engrossing and, finally, touching TONY RAYNS, FILM CRITIC

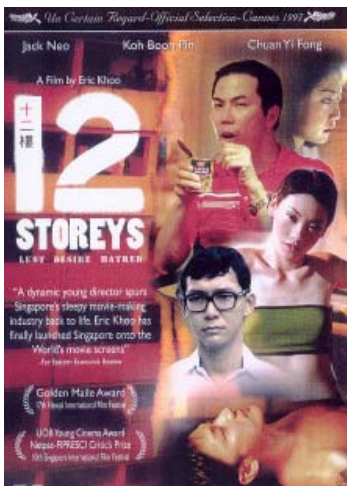
Mee Pok Man is the best piece of local film in too long a time. More importantly, it holds out the hope that quality cinema is truly a possibility in Singapore CORINNE KERK, BUSINESS TIMES

AWARDS FOR MEE POK MAN

1. Special Mention from the International Federation of Film Critics (FIPRESCI) (8th Singapore International Film Festival)
2. Special Jury Prize (9th Fukuoka Asian Film Festival - July 1996)
3. Special Mention from the Jury - New Currents Award Competition - Best New Asian Director (1st Pusan International Film Festival - September 1996)

FILM FESTIVALS

1. 8th Singapore International Film Festival (April)
2. Asian Film Festival/Asian-American Federation of Florida Inc. (May)
3. Fukuoka Asian Film Festival (Competition) (July)
4. 9th Moscow International Film Festival (Competition) (July)
5. The World Film Festival – Montreal (August/September)
6. La Biennale Di Venezia – Venice Film Festival (August/September)
7. 14th Vancouver International Film Festival (Competition) (September/October)
8. Mill Valley Film Festival (October)
9. The Shanghai International Film Festival (October/November)
10. Hawaii International Film Festival (November)
11. London Film Festival (November)
12. Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival (November/December)
13. 19th Cairo International Film Festival (November/December)
14. Berlin International Film Festival (Forum) (February 1996)
15. The Night Film Festival – Copenhagen (March)
16. Festival de Films de Fribourg (Competition) (March)
17. 11th Dublin Film Festival (March)
18. San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (March)
19. 20th Cleveland International Film Festival (March)
20. Hong Kong International Film Festival (March/April)
21. Sydney Film Festival (June)
22. 13th Jerusalem Film Festival (July)
23. Stockholm Film Festival (July)
24. Asian American Film Festival – New York/Brooklyn (July/August)
25. Sacramento Festival of Cinema (August)
26. The 1st Pusan International Film Festival (Competition) (September)
27. Australian International Film Festival – Canberra (October)
28. 16th Festival International du Film d'Amiens (November)
29. Filmfest Braunschweig (November)
30. Associacao Cultural Sladanha- Lisbon (November)
31. Calcutta International Film Festival (December)
32. PIA Film Festival – Tokyo (December)
33. Cinemaya- Kerala (January 1997)
34. Cinema Lumiere- Bologna (February)
35. International Film Festival of Festivals in Saint-Petersburg-St Petersburg (June)



12 STOREYS

Synopsis

The film depicts a day in a HDB block of residential flats in Singapore with all the action occurring within a 24-hour period. There are essentially three main storylines:

China Bride

Ah Gu (Jack Neo), a middle-aged man has brought home a pretty young wife from China (Quan Yifeng), but he has to cope with her overly high expectations, and hence increasing frustration and disappointment with life in Singapore.

San San

San San (Lucilla Teoh) lives alone with only suicide on her mind. A meeting with the daughter of her mother's former employer, Rachel (Neo Swee Lin) acts as a trigger for an outpouring of sadness.

Sister's Keeper

With parents away, upright but overbearing eldest brother Meng (Koh Boon Pin) takes the opportunity to lord it over his rebellious younger sister, Trixie (Lum May Yee) and little brother Tee (Roderick Lim). Meng's persistent interest in Trixie's personal life leads to first, an interrogation, then an argument, and ultimately something far more explosive.

12 STOREYS REVIEWS

“A dynamic young director spurs Singapore’s sleepy movie-making industry back to life. Eric Khoo has finally launched Singapore onto the World’s movie screens”
FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW

Eric Khoo’s 12 Storeys, the first Singaporean film to be shown at the Cannes Film Festival, is a tragicomic take on life... Far from the retail palaces of Orchard Road. TIME Magazine

Simply and elegantly the film presents unadorned slices of life that challenge the myth of a people thriving on “Asian values” ASIAN WALL STREET JOURNAL

It’s so truthful it hurts. TIME OUT FILM GUIDE

A truly magnificent Singaporean movie. THE NEW PAPER

12 Storeys is a showpiece that the nation can be proud of. THE STRAITS TIMES

Khoo has hit a high note with 12 Storeys. THE BUSINESS TIMES

The most Important Singaporean film yet made. DEREK MALCOM, CHIEF FILM CRITIC OF THE GUARDIAN

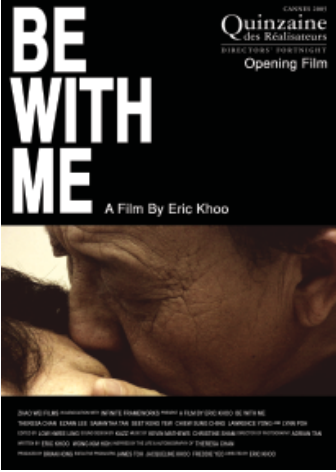


AWARDS FOR 12 STOREYS

1. UOB Young Cinema Award (10th Singapore International Film Festival)
2. NETPAC - FIPRESCI Critic's Prize (10th Singapore International Film Festival)
3. Golden Maile Award (Best Film 17th Hawaii International Film Festival)

FILM FESTIVALS

1. 10th Singapore International Film Festival, April 1997
2. 50th Cannes Film Festival
3. 30th Anniversary of ASEAN-ASEAN Film Festival, June 1997
4. Asean –Canberra Film Festival, August 1997
5. 46th Melbourne International Film Festival, July 1997
6. Montreal World Film Festival, August 1997
7. East – Asia Film & Television Festival (Penang), August 1997
8. Films From The South Film Festival (Oslo), September 1997
9. Filmfest Hamburg 1997
10. Mill Valley Film Festival, September 1997
11. South East Asian Film Festival (Vancouver). September 1997
12. 16th Vancouver International Film Festival, September 1997
13. 2nd Pusan International Film Festival, October 1997
14. 41st London Film Festival, November 1997
15. Hawaii International Film Festival, November 1997
16. Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival, November 1997
17. Mumbai Festival of Films, November 1997
18. Tokyo International Film Festival, November 1997
19. Stockholm International Film Festival, November 1997
20. 27th Rotterdam International Film Festival, January 1998
21. Fribourg International Film Festival, March 1998
22. 17th Istanbul International Film Festival, April 1998
23. Newport International Film Festival, March 1998
24. NetPac Asian Film Tours, March 1998
25. Brussels International Film Festival, January 1998
26. NAT International Film Festival, February 1998
27. Thessaloniki International Film Festival 1998
28. Bangkok Film Festival 1998
29. Commonwealth Film Festival (Kuala Lumpur), September 1998
30. Asean Secretariat Exhibition (Jarkarta) September 1998



BE WITH ME

Synopsis

Be With Me the new film by Eric Khoo (Mee Pok Man, 12 Storeys) is a tapestry of stories woven around the themes of love, hope and destiny. The characters lead separate lives but are bound by one common desire - to be with their loved one. The protagonists in the movie are fictitious bar one - Theresa Chan, a courageous deaf and blind woman whose life story inspired Be With Me.



BE WITH ME REVIEWS

There are at least 3 reasons why you should crave for BE WITH ME

Les Inrockuptibles

This way of portraying human experiences added to exerts & destinies define today an entire side of the cinema, in the 4 corners of the world. As part of this movement, BE WITH ME is a very creative success. Ahead of the multiplicity comes a unique character elevating the film higher than expected to the extent of the film, without letting down all the romances which make its great charm.

Télérama

Thanks to a wonderful sense of mounting, Eric Khoo succeeds a genius come back of the Altman model of a back & forth type edifying for the moral. With little means & a perfect framing, the director succeeds in the gutsiest & the most moving narrative bet in a long time.

Score

In order to know deeply the morose mood of well off contemporary individuals, the Asian cinema is always ahead of all the others. It's indeed again true with BE WITH ME, straight from Singapore.

Libération

Writer/director Eric Khoo and co-writer Wong Kim Hoh have come up with a cerebral solution to the intractable problem of making a Hallmark movie. The result is Khoo's most heartfelt and heartwarming movie to date. It is also the most sophisticated piece of film-making to emerge from the Republic's budding film scene. The way Khoo has marshaled his technical skills in the service of more characterization and story marks a new stage in his development.

Be With Me is an emotional maturation. His tender regard, especially evident in the old shopkeeper's story, takes his storytelling to the necessary next level. The movie's title is a simple plea. *Be With Me*. You will be rewarded if you answer its call.

The Straits Times – Ong Sor Fern

Slowly – ever so slowly – individual characters are introduced to viewers, who are then called upon to piece the diverse cinematic puzzle together. Just as the camera likes to linger lovingly on human faces and inanimate objects alike, so too the screenplay, penned by Khoo and Wong Kim Hoh, is a study in verbal economy, with barely a word or two uttered by many of the principal characters. Most of the narrative comes in the form of subtitled text from Chan's manuscript. This minimalist approach works because we are left to focus on feelings and emotions rather than dialogue. Meanwhile, Singapore is presented as a city bereft of its usual bustle and sheen, with many scenes taking place in simple homes, empty corridors and quiet streets. After wowing the audience at Cannes and winning distribution deals in Europe, *Be With Me* is compelling proof that a Singapore film can successfully stand up to scrutiny from a sophisticated international art house crowd. Thanks to Khoo's fine cinematic eye, it fully deserves to do the same over here.

The Business Times – Geoffrey Eu

One small, lovely film from Singapore made human communication its explicit subject – Eric Khoo's "**Be With Me**"..... When I mentioned "Be With Me" at the beginning of this piece, I did so with a conviction that it deserves wide distribution, and will find an appreciative audience. Almost silent and mysteriously disjointed at first, the film comes together into something that's as accessible as it is beautiful.

The Wall Street Journal – Joe Morgenstern

Be With Me is an act of romantic longing captured on film. Eric Khoo proves again why he's Singapore's most talented filmmaker.

Time – Bryan Walsh

I was in tears by the end, which is fairly rare.

The New York Times – Manohla Dargis

The true story is of the amazing Theresa Chan, a deaf and blind 61-year-old who is kind of like Southeast Asia's Helen Keller. When Khoo simply focuses on Chan's history and her day-to-day existence, the minimalism is cranked up. Rather than halting the film in its tracks, this elevates *Be With Me* to another level entirely.

The Globe And Mail Review

A great movie

Cahiers du Cinéma

Be With Me will hypnotise and fill you with constant emotions and pure sensations

Premiere

Be With Me is really a movie to discover

Le Monde

...this movie is captivating thanks to the strength of the images, the remarkable beauty, an amazing rhythm that seems to make you fly, and the grace that lies in each of the actors

STUDIO

An undelivered love letter

An unanswered, brittle mobile phone

A meal prepared with heart and soul

For your beloved

Or for a stranger.

Through Eric Khoo's camera lens, we can see his mission: finding a way out in a lonely metropolis for the downtrodden, the fragile, and the defeated, who are both among us and like us.

Watching the old man's face and his embrace with the blind lady, I am deeply moved.

TSAI MING-LIANG

Be With Me puts it all out there with tremendous yet understated power

filmcritic.com – Don Willmott

Singaporean Eric Khoo's third feature is a beautiful, contemplative study of love - unrequited, unfulfilled and reborn

Tv guide's Movie Guide – Ken Fox

Be With Me is eventually affecting once it's elliptical shape becomes clear

Village Voice – Michael Atkinson

A Singaporean drama that requires patience but ultimately rewards it

BBC – Matthew Leyland

Viewers' patience will be rewarded as the stories come together in a moving fashion

New York Post – V.A. Musetto

This elliptical, poetic movie is filled with yearning, humour and warmth

Chicago Reader – Andrea Gronvall

A delicately crafted, gently inflected, lovely little movie about the need for love

Chicago Tribune – Michael Wilmington

For French reviews visit www.allocine.com

AWARDS FOR BE WITH ME

Flanders International Film Festival-Gent 2005

1) Sabam Prize for Best Screenplay

Torino Film Festival 2005

1) Best Director

2) CinemAvvenire Award: (The Jury of the CinemAvvenire Award, composed of 20 young people from CinemAvvenire)

Best International Feature Film: BE WITH ME by Eric Khoo (Singapore, 2005, 35 mm, 90')

“Because by entering the universe of silence and darkness of his lead character, he has combined poetry and realism. He has also constructed a parable of courage and individual redemption, exalted by the confrontation with other realities of solitude and desperation he portrays.”

3) Holden School Award for Best Screenplay (Special Mention)

Brussels Festival of Independent Film

1) Best Director

Stockholm International Film Festival 2005

1) FIRPRESCI Jury Best Film

2) Best Cinematography

Tokyo International Film Festival 2005

Special Mention

CJ Asian Independent Film Festival 2005

1) Audience Award (voted by the audience as the most popular film)

Fribourg International Film Festival

1) Special Mention Jury Prize

2) Ecumenical Jury Award

3) Don Quijote Prize - FICC Jury

Mar Del Plata International Film Festival

Special Mention

Film Indianapolis International Film Festival

The Best of East Asia Award

Oporto International Film Festival

Fantasporto Special Prize Of The Júri

5th Commonwealth Film Festival, Manchester UK

runner-up in Audience Award

BE WITH ME FILM FESTIVAL PARTICIPATION

1. Telluride Film Festival
2. Toronto International Film Festival
3. Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival
4. Vancouver International Film Festival
5. Pusan International Film Festival
6. Flanders International Film Festival
7. Chicago International Film Festival
8. Haifa International Film Festival
9. Hofer Filmtage
10. CJ Asian Independent Film Festival Seoul
11. Tokyo International Film Festival
12. Torino Film Festival
13. Thessaloniki International Film Festival
14. Gijon International Film Festival
15. Brussels Festival of Independent Film
16. Stockholm International Film Festival
17. Fribourg International Film Festival
18. Mar Del Plata International Film Festival
19. Film Indianapolis International Film Festival
20. Oporto International Film Festival
21. 5th Commonwealth Film Festival, Manchester UK

