BAMcinémathek presents **Stephen Chow: The King of Comedy**, Oct 6—12

“The reigning king of Hong Kong comedy.”—J. Hoberman

Co-presented with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York.

*The Wall Street Journal* is the title sponsor for BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinémathek.

Brooklyn, NY/Sep 8, 2014—From Monday, October 6 through Sunday, October 12, BAMcinémathek presents **Stephen Chow: The King of Comedy**, an eight-film retrospective of the Hong Kong actor, writer, and director. Chow’s audaciously anarchic comedies combine surreal sight gags, non sequiturs, extensive pop culture quoting, and gravity-defying martial arts to sublimely silly effect. Endlessly inventive, the reigning king of Hong Kong *mo lei tau* (“nonsense comedy”) yields unfiltered cinematic pleasure.

Initially prominent as a children’s television star, Chow became synonymous with *mo lei tau*, a style of film comedy in which traditional melodramas and kung fu tales are peppered with rapid-fire, fourth-wall-breaking slapstick bits and corny puns. A bigger box-office draw in his homeland than Jackie Chan or Jet Li, Chow—who cites Spielberg and Kubrick, along with Jim Carrey, as influences—has used his clout in recent years to fashion himself as an auteur, scripting, editing, and directing a series of high-budget, homage-filled blockbusters.

Typical of Chow’s earliest hits, Johnnie To’s *Justice, My Foot!* (1992—Oct 8) casts the actor as a fast-talking lawyer whose mouth gets him into trouble, and whose kung fu-fighting wife gets him out of it—one of many tough, smart heroines Chow uses as foils for his feckless alter egos. In *King of Beggars* (1992—Oct 7), his cockeyed tribute to Bruce Lee, Chow plays a fraudulent martial arts master, hobbled and reduced to penury, who fights his way to redemption—using the unorthodox “Sleeping Fist” style.

Epic in scale but still utterly goofy, Jeffrey Lau’s *A Chinese Odyssey: Parts One and Two* (1995—Oct 12) adapts Wu Cheng’en’s famous Ming Dynasty novel as a fantasy saturated with visual effects and elaborate wire fu. Before the world had ever heard of Gordon Ramsay or *Top Chef*, *The God of Cookery* (1996—Oct 6) featured Chow as an arrogant celebrity chef who bests his rivals with a masterful meatball. Rife with inside jokes, including a dead-on parody of John Woo’s balletic action choreography, *King of Comedy* (1999—Oct 9) stars Chow as the world’s worst extra, who nonetheless catches the eye of an action movie heroine (Karen Mok)—and a call girl (Cecilia Cheung) who studies acting to better conceal her disgust for her lecherous clients.

Typical of Chow’s latest works, his solo directorial debut *Shaolin Soccer* (2001—Oct 11) postulates that specialized kung fu skills like lightning kicks and air walking have little use in the modern era—except, maybe, in the hands (and legs) of an underdog soccer team. *Kung Fu Hustle* (2004—Oct 10) pits 1930s gangsters against a dusty town full of tougher-than-they-look hicks, with Chow working the middle as a woefully inept thug—but the ensuing showdown is more Wile E. Coyote than *Yojimbo*, and there’s always time for a musical interlude. Kicking off with an amazingly detailed Rube Goldberg battle between a demon fish and a rickety seaside town, *Journey to the West* (2013—Oct 12) is Chow’s biggest spectacle yet, a re-imagining of *A Chinese Odyssey* that features delirious CGI, ever more audacious leaps.
between comedy and horror, and an unforgettable star turn by The Transporter’s Shu Qi as a fierce, sexy demon hunter. “...Might be the craziest thing he’s done yet. You may wonder, afterwards, if you dreamt it all” (Bilge Ebiri, New York magazine).

Co-presented with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York.

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**Stephen Chow: The King of Comedy Schedule**

**Mon, Oct 6**
7:30pm: The God of Cookery

**Tue, Oct 7**
7, 9:15pm: King of Beggars

**Wed, Oct 8**
7, 9:15pm: Justice, My Foot!

**Thu, Oct 9**
7:30, 9:30pm: King of Comedy

**Fri, Oct 10**
2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm: Kung Fu Hustle

**Sat, Oct 11**
7, 9:15pm: Shaolin Soccer

**Sun, Oct 12**
4pm: A Chinese Odyssey: Parts One & Two
8pm: Journey to the West: Conquering the Demons

**Film Descriptions**
All films in Cantonese with English subtitles and 35mm unless otherwise noted.

**A Chinese Odyssey: Parts One & Two** (1995) 188min with intermission
Directed by Jeffrey Lau. With Stephen Chow, Man Tat Ng, Karen Mok.
This zany two-part epic—a huge cult sensation in China—stars Chow as the reincarnated Monkey King who journeys back in time to reunite with his master, Longevity Monk. A nutty spectacle of Chow’s nonsense antics, high-flying action choreography, and a fabled character who can transform into grapes, A Chinese Odyssey is Hong Kong cinema at its wildest and most unrestrained. Two films for the price of one! HDCAM.

Sun, Oct 12 at 4pm

**The God of Cookery** (1996) 95min
Directed by Stephen Chow & Li Lik-Chi. With Stephen Chow, Karen Mok, Vincent Kuk.
Chow is at his wild and woolly best as a celebrity chef charlatan who is exposed as a fraud and must claw his way back up from the bottom to reclaim the title of “God of Cookery.” Culminating in a side-splittingly absurdist Iron Chef-style kitchen battle, this riotous kung food comedy is a bonkers blend of cooking, martial arts, and slapstick mayhem.

Mon, Oct 6 at 7:30pm

**Journey to the West: Conquering the Demons** (2013) 110min
Directed by Stephen Chow & Derek Kwok. With Wen Zhang, Shu Qi, Huang Bo.
Chow’s latest is this delirious take on an ancient Chinese legend, which chronicles the exploits of a rookie demon hunter (Zhang) as he tangles with a host of evil spirits—including a man-eating fish, a cannibalistic pig-man, and the fearsome Monkey King. *Journey to the West* is one of his most thoroughly over the top, nutso, totally enjoyable comic fantasias yet. DCP.

**Sun, Oct 12 at 8pm**

**Justice, My Foot!** (1992) 102min
Directed by Johnnie To. With Stephen Chow, Anita Mui, Man Tat Ng.
Chow teamed up with the late Canto-pop superstar Anita Mui and fellow Hong Kong auteur Johnnie To for this deliriously freewheeling farce. He’s a crooked lawyer and she’s his butt-kicking, kung fu-fighting wife who’s unable to have a child because of a karmic curse brought on by her husband’s unethical ways. Among the ensuing insanity: a barrage of rude, crude fart jokes and a *Silence of the Lambs* parody.

**Wed, Oct 8 at 7, 9:15pm**

**King of Beggars** (1992) 101min
Directed by Gordon Chan. With Stephen Chow, Sharla Cheung, Man Tat Ng.
The spoiled son (Chow) of a Qing dynasty-era nobleman sets out to become a martial arts master in order to win the love of a courtesan—and winds up becoming a beggar in the process. This goofball “chopsocky” spoof is highlighted by one of Chow’s most brilliantly hilarious set pieces, in which he kung fu fights an opponent...while dozing off!

**Tue, Oct 7 at 7, 9:15pm**

**King of Comedy** (1999) 89min
Directed by Stephen Chow & Li Lik-Chi. With Stephen Chow, Karen Mok, Cecilia Cheung.
Unable to cut it in the movie business, a hapless aspiring actor (Chow) has significantly more luck giving acting lessons to a call girl (Cheung)—and eventually finding romance. This manic showbiz satire is Chow’s most personally revealing, autobiographical work and boasts a dead-on John Woo spoof, a cameo by Jackie Chan, and a surreal finale involving a copious amount of Pringles.

**Thu, Oct 9 at 7:30, 9:30pm**

**Kung Fu Hustle** (2004) 99min
Directed by Stephen Chow. With Stephen Chow, Yuen Qiu, Yuen Wah.
Martial arts meets *Looney Tunes* in Chow’s dazzling 1940s-set action-comedy, wherein a dimwitted wannabe bad guy (Chow) gets caught up in a furious battle between a slum town and a mob of ax-wielding gangsters. Among its eye-popping wonders: a Road Runner-style chase; a chorus line of tap-dancing villains; and a kung fu master landlady whose scream reduces her opponents to dust.

**Fri, Oct 10 at 2, 4:30, 7, 9:30pm**

**Shaolin Soccer** (2001) 87min
Directed by Stephen Chow. With Stephen Chow, Wei Zhao, Man Tat Ng.
This dizzyingly daffy sports comedy follows a Buddhist martial arts master (Chow) as he assembles a group of fellow monks to take on the nefarious Team Evil in a million dollar soccer match. Complete with flaming soccer balls, musical numbers, and a *Seven Samurai* send-up, Chow’s breakout international hit—which also broke box office records in Hong Kong—reaches transcendentally absurd heights.

**Sat, Oct 11 at 7, 9:15pm**

**About BAMcinématek**

The four-screen BAM Rose Cinemas (BRC) opened in 1998 to offer Brooklyn audiences alternative and independent films that might not play in the borough otherwise, making BAM the only performing arts center in the country with two mainstage theaters and a multiplex cinema. In July 1999, beginning with a series celebrating the work of Spike Lee, BAMcinématek was born as Brooklyn’s only daily, year-round repertory film program. BAMcinématek presents new and rarely seen contemporary films, classics, work by local artists, and festivals of films from around the world, often with special appearances by directors, actors, and other guests. BAMcinématek has not only presented major retrospectives by major filmmakers such as Michelangelo Antonioni, Manoel de Oliveira, Shohei Imamura, Vincente Minnelli (winning a National Film Critics’ Circle Award prize for the retrospective), Kaneto Shindo, Luchino Visconti, and William Friedkin, but it has also introduced New York audiences to contemporary artists such as Pedro Costa and Apichatpong Weerasethakul. In addition, BAMcinématek programmed the first US retrospectives of directors
Arnaud Desplechin, Nicolas Winding Refn, Hong Sang-soo, and, most recently, Andrzej Zulawski. From 2006 to 2008, BAMcinématek partnered with the Sundance Institute and in June 2009 launched BAMcinemaFest, a 16-day festival of new independent films and repertory favorites with 15 NY feature film premieres; the sixth annual BAMcinemaFest ran from June 18—29, 2014.

Credits

The Wall Street Journal is the title sponsor of BAM Rose Cinemas and BAMcinématek.

Steinberg Screen at the BAM Harvey Theater is made possible by The Joseph S. and Diane H. Steinberg Charitable Trust.

Pepsi is the official beverage of BAM.

Brooklyn Brewery is the preferred beer of BAMcinématek.

BAM Rose Cinemas are named in recognition of a major gift in honor of Jonathan F.P. and Diana Calthorpe Rose. BAM Rose Cinemas would also like to acknowledge the generous support of The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, The Estate of Richard B. Fisher, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Brooklyn Delegation of the New York City Council, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, Bloomberg, and Time Warner Inc. Additional support for BAMcinématek is provided by the Coolidge Corner Theatre Foundation, The Grodzins Fund, The Liman Foundation, the Frederick Loewe Foundation, and Summit Rock Advisors.

Stephen Chow: The King of Comedy is programmed by Andrew Chan and David Reilly.

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General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn’s only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers a bar menu and dinner entrées prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of spoken word and live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a bar menu available starting at 6pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater)

D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue

Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center

Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM

Car: Commercial parking lots are located adjacent to BAM

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.