

## Chapter I Introduction

### I. Introduction

Taipei Film Festival is going to be held. The authorities concerned particularly sell “City Film Passports” in Taipei Spot today. Although the selling started at 1:00 in the afternoon, some people started to wait in line since six in the morning. The authorities concerned finished delivering 150 sets of number tickets at 12:30. They started to sell at 1:00; people waited in line respectively taking the film passports from the spokesman of the film festival, Yiu-Ning Yang (楊祐寧)<sup>1</sup>. They were all sold out within one hour (*Central News Agency*, 2004.2.28).

Many people collect pictures of their idols, while some collect posters. How do you deal with your stubs after your moviegoing. Chang Ben-Yu<sup>2</sup> (張本渝) takes them home and placed them into her treasure box, where she collects all the stubs of the movies she has seen for the past ten years. Chang Ben-Yu said that she kept a diary with film stubs, on the back of which she recorded the time, the friends to share the movie together, and her feelings, etc. By reading them, she may recall her joy or depression at that time (Ya-Lan Wang 王雅蘭, 2003: Cs8).

Alternative film fans and popular music fans are all fans, sharing plenty of similar insane behaviors. John Fiske asserts that “fan culture” is a characteristic of popular culture (1992). Yet “fan culture” is not exclusively for popular culture; this idea and phenomenon should be also true in other fields, such as art film fans. In Taipei, besides popular music fans, there are a large number of alternative film audiences, who are mostly art film fans, adoring art films. Attending film festivals frequently, waiting in lines for tickets, collecting

<sup>1</sup> If people do not have an English name, I translate some of the Chinese names into English names, with a glossary of names in both languages attached as Appendix IV.

<sup>2</sup> Chang Ben-Yu is a movie actress.

film-related objects, etc. are significant activities in the life of many art film fans. The movies they love are mostly the works of great film masters or the ones awarding the prizes in universal film festivals.

In Taiwan, the more prevailing Hollywood movies become, the greater depression domestic filmmakers have to face, and the less domestic works they produce. Directors complain about the unfavorable filmmaking environment; independent distributors also sigh for the hardships of film management. There are numerous mournful critiques, as follows:

During the severe depression, independent distributors are forced to face the reality of our government's participating in WTO, according to which Hollywood majors get to import mainstream movies in an unlimited quantity, which makes the filmmaking environment in Taiwan worse and worse. Besides the limited quantity of art film audiences, the limited budget of importing films and the theatrical arrangement of movies are also problems independent distributors have to face. In the future, not only Taiwanese films but European and American alternative films of high quality will certainly become rare in Taiwan (Lan-Ching Chen, Chih-Chien Tang, 陳蘭青, 湯志堅, 2002: V6).

Nevertheless, audiences' chances to watch "art films" do not decrease actually during the past few years. Instead, film festivals of all sorts appear in great quantity. Films awarded prizes in universal film festivals are frequently played in a certain cinemas as well. It is very different from the past when people can see alternative films merely in the annual Golden-Horse Film Festival. Moreover, is there really the distinction of "art films" and "commercial movies?" Who possesses the rights of its definition? The apparently-resembled art film festivals are actually commercial movie festivals, following capital logics, a niche-market strategy aimed at alternative film audience, namely 'art' film fans, with the ultimate target of success in box office.

What type of film audience are these art film fans? Why are they fond of dreaming such kind of dreams and how do they acquire the capabilities to interpret them? How do they possess the secret skills and secret access to the dreamlands? How are films meaningful to those who love going to art cinemas and film festivals? Through what fields and media do they become art film fans? What are the characteristics of their life styles? What is the difference between the way they love films and that of general public?

Art film fans tend to be well-educated and cultivated by film or art courses. It has something to do with the possession of cultural capital and the acquisition of deciphering abilities towards alternative films. It is not because they are gifted nor that they have the inherent capabilities of art appreciation.

The annual Golden-Horse Film Festival, the greatest regular film festival in Taiwan, is held in Taipei all the time; the island-wide film fans endeavor to go to Taipei to participate in this grand activity. “During the Golden-Horse Film Festivals, International Film Exhibition is always a required homework for film fans” (*United Daily News*, 2001-11-17 / V42). In 1999 begins the First Taipei Film Festival. Besides, a good many official or non-official film festivals are held in Taipei; art cinemas gather in Taipei as well. Thus, art film fans in Taipei have far more opportunities and accesses to seeing alternative movies; consequently, art film fans also gather in Taipei. In comparison with Taipei, there is a great shortage of cultural and filmic resources in the other areas. A serious gap exists between cities and countries in respect of film resources.

Besides film festivals and art cinemas gathering in Taipei, there are also some other newly-established film institutions. For instance, the Department of Cultural Affairs, Taipei City Government, managed to restore the historical former residence of the United States Ambassador into “SPOT Taipei Film House” as an exclusive art-film showing theater. Besides, Xi-Men-Ding Film Theme Park is intended to start before June in 2005. “Movie Salon,” located in Hoover Theater, began in 2003 and has been giving various film courses.

Now, it is changed into “Film Arts Institute,” with performance courses added. To study art film fans in Taiwan, Taipei is an important place; furthermore, Xi-Men-Ding is an original area for development of Taiwanese film culture.

In recent years, Taipei City Government has even transformed it into an important space of consuming popular culture for youngsters. Many art films are played merely in art houses in Xi-Men-Ding, where film fans have to go for movies. Nevertheless, in the meanwhile, they have conflict and feel incompatible with this area, filled with teenage popular commodities; they even regard it as a “disorderly” and “chaotic” place. To my strangeness, these art film fans love to dream in the cinemas in Xi-Men-Ding; while awaking from dreams, from the dark places and coming into the bustling walk area, they would long to escape from it as soon as possible. As for film fans, movie theaters are merely a heterotopia providing a transient time and space for dreaming and keeping them away from the mundane world. They are dissatisfied with the expanding popular culture space, which decrease the “high-art” film culture space, whereas some art film fans still love this multiple-culture space, juxtaposed with difference. Why are there such distinct differences between them? Does it have anything to do with their life style, taste, preference, and their spatial aesthetics? How do art film fans’ life style be practiced in their ways of utilizing spaces and understanding spaces? As art film fans, how do they fanaticize and how do they practice their life style in Xi-Men-Ding? The complex relation between films, art film fans, life styles, and space is an issue worthwhile to be explored.

Roland Barthes says that a city is the place where we meet others (Barthes 537). Xi-Men-Ding, bustling and crowded, is a place in which people meet others easily. In the book *City Worlds*, we may read the situation that different groups mingle with one another but isolate from each other indifferently (Massey, Allen & Pile 49). It is the same as the groups in Xi-Men-Ding. They do not simply fail to see others as people in Jimmy’s comic book, *Turn Left and Turn Right*, but look at and imagine other people with critical eyes.

Youngsters cannot recognize art film fans who considering themselves not belonging to Xi-Men-Ding and can merely imagine who they are and how they look. Sometimes, art film fans behave as dreamers and dream interpreters, disdain the young and Xi-Men-Ding; sometimes, they behave perfectly as competent consumers. From time to time, they are as mad as the other sorts of fans such as Japanophiles<sup>3</sup> or pop music fans. While they attend film activities, using the national resources, they keep silent, not thinking of the others who fail to have the access to film activities and resources. Yet while they feel dissatisfied with national policies, they become aware of their citizenship and make critical discourses. Art film fans in Taipei, coming from all parts of Taiwan, soak in the national film resources, complaining about their disabilities to return to their hometowns, where there is a shortage of film resources. How do they transfer the multiple but ambivalent roles without self-consciousness?



## II. Xi-Men-Ding, Film and Fan: Literature Review

“Art” film fans are the main body of my research. Their spatial playing fields of movie watching contain three layers---film texts, movie theaters and the space of Xi-Men-Ding including other consuming groups inside. The characteristics and contexts of Xi-Men-Ding, therefore, ought to be involved in the studies as well. As for the literature reviews, I would like to discuss from the respects of films, film audiences, fan studies, and the spatial culture in Xi-Men-Ding, and so forth.

### 2.1 Film and Film Audience

Generally speaking, people classify films into two categories: alternative films and mainstream commercial movies, namely most Hollywood movies. Most film fans watch both of them; besides Hollywood movie audiences, they are rather art film fans. Yet there is no

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<sup>3</sup> Japanophiles means fans who are crazy about Japanese culture.

exact definition and distinction between commercial movies and art films.

In Taiwan, there are many film studies, most of which refer to film text studies, the film policy and the industry, the politics and economics of films, or film history, and very few of which to film audiences, and even none of which to art film fans. In addition to in-depth interviews to explore their life experiences and their practicing being fans, I will cite Bourdieu's arguments of cultural capital to illustrate art film fans and attempt to discuss films, movie theaters and film fans by the metaphor of "dreams." In this thesis, I attempt to take an in-depth research on art film fans, especially those in the significant film culture area in Taipei, Xi-Men-Ding.

Chia-Chi Peng (彭佳琪) does her research film audiences' lifestyles by a questionnaire survey of 600 volunteers and by statistical analysis. The results read that most film audiences have a bachelor's degree and half of them have taken film courses. Her research outcome may offer a general understanding towards the general film audiences, yet she fails to explore deeply and discuss film audiences, and neither can we understand art film fans' life experiences and related stories from her thesis.

Yuo-Long Kuo (郭幼龍) is another researcher on film audiences in Taiwan. He also utilizes the questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis to explore people's relationship among an evaluation of Taiwanese films, film consuming behaviors, and their moviegoing motivation. The same goes to Peng, for they both rely on quantitative research and statistical analysis, which fail to understand deeply every detailed item, and which merely gives a general reference of film spectatorship. Yu-Chi Chen (陳毓奇) aims at "seeing the movie," the entire process of this behavior and only makes a general description of all these processes. It is not deeply explored.

My thesis strives to explore art film fans and especially takes the specific film space of Xi-Men-Ding into consideration and research, by qualitative in-depth interviews, different

from the past film audience researchers' quantitative research and statistical analysis. Not the same as general film audiences, but rather, art film fans resemble fans in other cultural fields; the particularity of my thesis is that I do the research of this special group of film audiences, art film fans, in the angle of fans.

## 2.2 Fan Studies

What is a "fan?" In our daily life, we hear frequently every sort of fan stories and traces. For instance, in 2003, baseball game fans flew to gather together in Japan to cheer Chinese Taipei team. Just on the first day of selling tickets for 2003 Gold Horse Festival, most film tickets were all sold out. Japanophiles are crazy about Japan's popular culture and commodities. Star fans squeeze themselves into the crowded Xi-Men-Ding to see their idols. Such kinds of fan stories are too numerous to enumerate. Yet we may find some common characteristics shared in these fans, investing far more time, money, energy and enthusiasm on a particular text than other people at all costs, so considerable an extent that they are easily recognized and differentiated from others. As Lisa Lewis states in the beginning of her book she edited on fan culture, "[f]ans are...the most visible and identifiable of audiences" (1).

In Taiwan, there are many theses about fans. Some focus on fan theories (Sherry Jean 簡妙如, 1996), some on research of local cases (Hsing-Hui Wang 王幸慧, 1998; Jiun-Chung Cheng 鄭君仲, 2001; Ting-Yi Sung 宋丁儀, 2002; I-Jui Lin 林逸叡, 2003). The research in terms of the idea of the active audience has increased (Hsing-Hui Wang 10). Sherry Jean is the first domestic researcher who lists and expounds related fan theories and arguments in the west in detail in her thesis. She finds that most scholars indicate that fans are excessive audiences and that the fan is a socio-cultural phenomenon. Therefore, the quoted arguments of Western scholars on fan culture in the thesis after her make no big difference from hers. The same as foreign scholars, most recent domestic researchers on fans tend to view fans as active consumers and emphasize fans' being active and creative. Fans are no longer considered passive consumers from the angle of Theodor Adorno's cultural industry.

Many researches of pop music fans focus on the relationship of fans and idols, such as Veronica P.C. Lee (李佩真) (1998). Jiun-Chung Cheng (2001) has in-depth interviews of 24 Mayday fans and try to do a text analysis of Mayday songs. For he believes the particularity of the pop music fans lies in their unique audience experiences and interactive ways towards music texts, as well as their cultural meanings. From such angle he tries to observe Mayday fans and regards them as a special type of audiences. Nevertheless, his attempts seem to fail. His research is not profound.

Ting-Yi Sung tries to understand, by in-depth interviews, how fans of puppet drama construct their imagination and subjectivity towards the Pili puppet drama through different modes of consumption. He explores how the puppet drama fans appreciate and receive texts, how they create and produce the sub-texts, and how they distinguish themselves from others by participating communities and activities. Moreover, he emphasizes the importance of how life experiences are related highly to audience experiences. He claims that life experiences are indispensable for conducting audience studies (3). His research towards Pili puppet drama fans, especially his in-depth interview questionnaire stressing fans' life experiences, is very interesting and thorough, which is worth my while to take reference on art film fans.

Hsing-Hui Wang, a fan of the Japanese drama herself, takes charge of a BBS “the Twins.” She then takes this as an object of her field observation and also searches for interviewees there. She participates in the research as an insider, which is quite special. Besides narrating the detailed development of the Japanese drama, she describes how Japanese drama fans practice being “Japanese drama fans” in their everyday life and how they display their productivity and influence, which enables Japanese drama to have become a popular cultural phenomenon in Taiwan and a main leisure activity for Japanophiles.

Japanophiles love to go shopping in Xi-Men-Ding, which is called “Hari City” (a city for Japanophiles) by Heng-Chang Chi (饒恆昌) (2001). Most young people in Xi-Men-Ding are Japanophiles. Another group there who contrasts with youngsters is my research object.



Different from theses on fans for music, puppet drama and Japanophiles, the fans in my research, art film fans, are fans on a text and a field. Besides, my thesis has some following characteristics. It is not a popular culture fan studies, but rather a high art fan studies, concerning deeply how fans are cultivated and their spatial connection.

### 2.3 Spatial Culture of Xi-Men-Ding

Art film fans enter the dreaming places, dark cinemas, which provide them with a concrete dreaming space. Movie theaters and art cinemas mostly gather in Xi-Men-Ding, the most important film culture space, where there are many festivals held and art films screened. It is a film mecca for art film fans. Therefore, to research on art film fans, their concrete film space should not be omitted, not only cinemas, but also the spatial culture of Xi-Men-Ding.

Xi-Men-Ding resembles a giant outdoors shopping mall, with plenty of teenage culture shops, movie theaters, pedestrian areas, street performers, and so on. Youngsters gather there frequently; stars' promotion activities are held on the plazas of the pedestrian area from time to time. Even the official propaganda aimed at the young take place there. Under the cooperative endeavor of Taipei City Government and the companies, Xi-Men-Ding has become Japanophiles' haunt and an important popular culture consuming space specifically for the young. It is a spatial practice of the phenomenon of Japanophiles' being crazy about Japanese culture (Heng-Chang Chi 91).

There are many theses on Xi-Men-Ding. Apart from those about urban design and business studies, most of the others refer to age politics, concerning the young and the old, quite few about film audiences. None discusses Xi-Men-Ding from the angle of cultural consumption, and none about social interaction among groups, their socio-cultural conditions and how people form different film habitus, which I shall add to my research.

The only one on film research in Xi-Men-Ding, Lung-Yen Yeh's (葉龍彥) "The Film History in Taipei Xi-Men-Ding: 1896-1997," has an abundant historical data about the films

and theaters in Xi-Men-Ding, yet there is no deep analysis about the film audiences. His “The Story of Xi-Men-Ding” just gives a general picture of this area, but not in detail, lacking a focus. Yu-Cheng Lien (連育正) merely discusses the relationship among the consumption of youngsters, the interior design of popular shops in Xi-Men-Ding and the young’s preference towards it. He does not take the other groups into consideration socially and culturally.

I-Hsin Chen (陳懿欣) discusses the urban life in Xi-Men-Ding, focusing on the culture of the elder and the young. Nevertheless, she fails to discuss differences and tense between the two groups, and she does not mention the recent popular culture in Xi-Men-Ding and analyze film audiences there. Chih Heng-Chang discusses the consuming landscape of Xi-Men-Ding, its urban and cultural transforming process from the angle of (post)colonialism and of being Japanophiles. Furthermore, he has a thorough research about the development and historical context of the consuming culture for youngsters’ craving for Japanese culture there. He focuses on youngsters’ loving popular culture and on how Xi-Men-Ding has become youngsters’ “Hari City” (a city for Japanophiles). I would like to add another group, art film fans, to my research, discussing art film fans, cinemas, along with their interaction.

### III. Art Film Fans’ Life Style: Theories

This research attempts to analyze art film fans’ habitus, cultural capital, their lifestyle and taste. I compare them to dreamers and dream interpreters in the dark theaters. As for them, attending film festivals and going to the movies resemble a ritual, even a pilgrimage. To answer my concerned questions, I try to discuss my topics in the respects of fan culture, lifestyle, cultural capital, habitus, field and dreams, etc. The theoretical structure of my thesis is as follows. (View Figure 1.1).

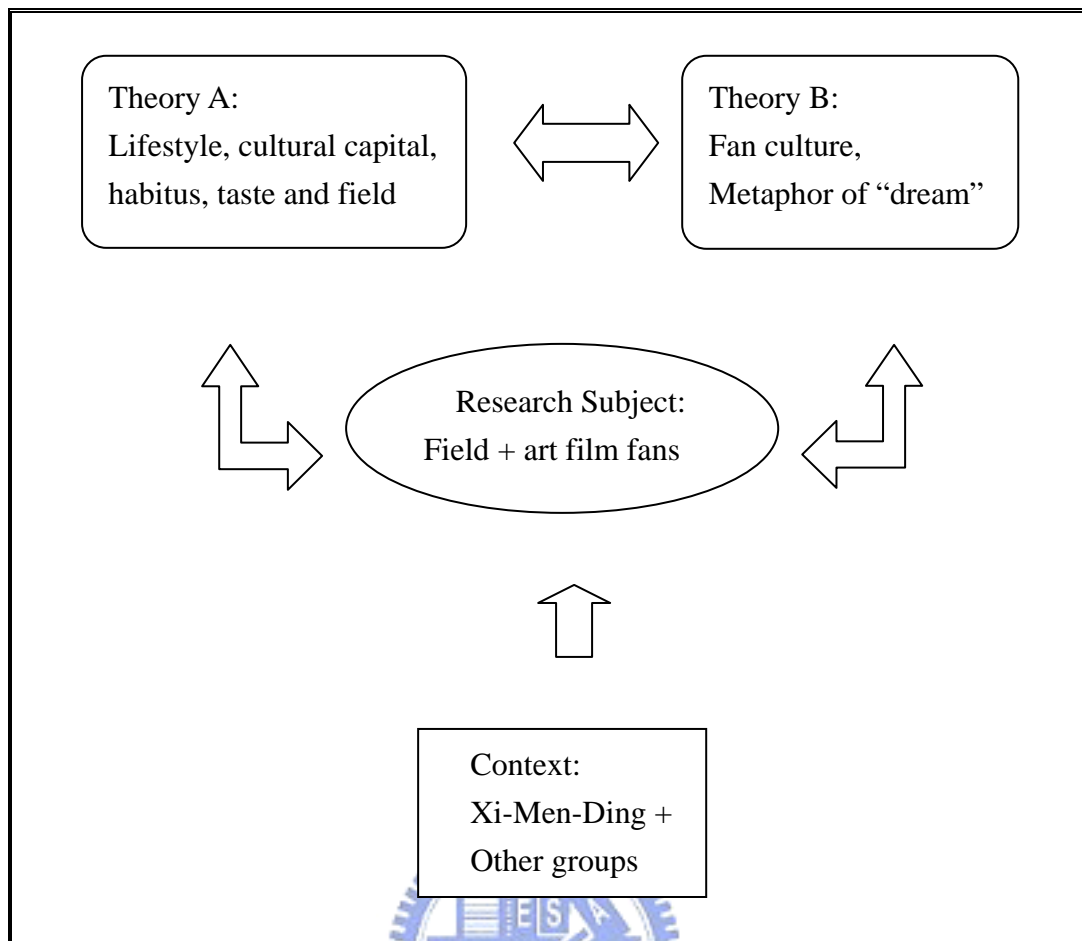


Figure 1.1 Theoretical structure of my thesis

### 3.1 Fan Culture

Fans invest more and identify more with certain targets than other people, which is the essence of excess. “Excessive” is the adjective scholars use for describing fans (Sherry Jean 18). For example, Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst, observe that “[w]e all probably have commonsensical images of the fan in our minds and they would be linked by the idea of some kind of excess of admiration of an activity or star” (122). Excess contains outer behaviors and inner reaction, the former being participation, the behaviors of crazy crowds, the act of following by devoted fanatics, investing imaginative relationship intensively, producing fan texts and works, and organizing fans’ communities. The inner reaction includes emotional admiration and worship, ideological identification, differentiation from other people and texts. Accordingly, we may say that fans are a kind of “excessive audience”(Sherry Jean 18-27).

Denis McQuail asserts that fans are audiences interested in particular authors, directors, types of contents, or in specific cultural or intellectual taste; its composition varies with time (qtd. in Jiun-Chung Cheng 20). Art film fans have their adored directors or interested topics. Some are fans of François Truffaut, some of Tarkovsky, some of Wim Wenders. Some prefer minority issues, some gender or post-colonial issues. For some fans, livelihood and lack of time stop them from being film fans continually, while for others, having an income enables them to be film fans even more. Fandom varies as one grows.

Lawrence Grossberg, who delivers a rock-and-roll course in a university, is a rock-and-roll fan himself. He feels something queer about a “fan.” He finds that most tend to regard fans as “juveniles, waiting to grow, and still enjoying the irresponsibility of their fandom” (51). Actually, it is not. Fandom exists in all ages, genders and walks of life, not exclusively for youngsters. Moreover, the past researchers incline to criticize fans negatively. Jenson notes,



There is very little literature that explores fandom as a normal, everyday cultural or social phenomenon. Instead, the fan is characterized as (at least potentially) an obsessed loner, suffering from a disease of isolation, or a frenzied crowd member, suffering from a disease of contagion. In other case, the fan is seen as being irrational, out of control, and prey to a number of external forces (Jenson 13).

The reason why there are so many negative views of fans is elitism. As Jenson has queried, we should not regard fans as dangerous “others” and distinguish them from “people like us (students, professors and social critics)” (9). Furthermore, she criticizes, “what is the basis for these differences between fans like ‘them’ and aficionados like ‘us’?” She indicates the wrong bias of most people,

The objects of an aficionado’s desire are usually deemed high culture... Apparently, if the object of desire is popular with the lower or middle class, relatively

inexpensive and wide available, it is fandom...if it is popular with the wealthy and well educated, expensive and rare, it is preference, interest or expertise (19).

In Jenson's opinion, aficionados and fans make no difference. "Fandom is a common feature of popular culture in industrial societies," declares John Fiske in the beginning of his "the Cultural Economy of Fandom" (30). Fandom, in fact, is not exclusively for popular culture. In the so-called "high culture," there are also fanatics engrossed in some particular text. Fandom is a normal social and cultural phenomenon. All of them are fans similarly, but in different fields and in different texts. Jenson asserts that it is not suitable to contrast "the traits of the fan with those of the high culture or academic 'aficionado.'" She argues that many academics form attachment to their favorite writers or theorists which are just as obsessive as those the fan may feel for the pop star" (qtd in Abercrombie and Longhurst 123).

Sherry Jean also argues that fandom does not indicate simply for elites nor ordinary people, but a possible cultural and social phenomenon to everyone (10). Even for the rock-and-roll fan and scholar Grossberg, "everyone is constantly a fan of various sorts of things, for one cannot exist in a world where nothing matters" (63). Fandom, hence, may be considered a common life experience to most people in a different text, manner and extent.

Grossberg declares, "the relationship between the audience and popular texts is an active and productive one" (52). John Fiske has further ideas,

[P]opular audiences engage in varying degrees of semiotic productivity, producing meaning and pleasures that pertain to their social situation out of the products of the culture industries. But fans often turn this semiotics productivity into some form of textual production that can circulate among...the fan community (30).

As I have argued above, such phenomena do not exist exclusively for popular culture. It is the same in other culture. For instance, art film fans go to the Internet or BBS to discuss and circulate assorted film issues and information, writing film critiques, which may be

printed in film magazines and books, shown in web sites, electronic newspaper or personal web news station, and so forth.

Jenkins proposes a model of fandom that operates on four levels:

1. "*Fans adopt a distinctive mode of reception,*" which are traits of "specific social and cultural communities (209, original emphasis).
2. "*Fandom constitutes a particular interpretative community:* Given the highly social orientation of fan reading practices, fan interpretations need to be understood in institutional rather than personal terms" (210, original emphasis).
3. "*Fandom constitutes a particular Art World.*" Jenson quotes Howards Becker, "Art Worlds produce works and also give them aesthetic values" (qtd in Jenson 211, original emphasis). He explains furthermore that art world "refer to system of aesthetic norm and generic conventions, systems of professional training and reputation building, systems for the circulation, exhibition and/or sale of artworks, system for critical evaluation" (211). Art film fans certainly belong to the art world.
4. "*Fandom constitutes an alternative social community.*" Although fans never or seldom meet face to face with one another, they "share a common sense of identity and interests.....What fandom offers is...a community of consumers defined through their common relationship with shared texts" (213, original emphasis).

Fiske declares that fan culture is the characteristic of popular culture. For the research of art film fans, the position of this thesis would appropriate Fiske's ideas in other culture including high culture, such as art films. Fan culture actually exists in all fields and classes, not only in popular culture but also in high culture as long as one is crazy for one particular text. I agree with Jenson's argument that fan culture is a general, normal and everyday cultural and social phenomenon, no matter in which class, in popular or high culture. I also agree with Grossberg's comments that everybody may be a fan of some specific text, and that between the audience and popular texts is an active and productive relationship. Jenkins' four

operating levels of fandom is also a structure followed in my research.

### 3.2 Lifestyle, Cultural Capital, Habitus, Taste and Field

John Fiske proposes three main characteristics of fandom: discrimination and distinction, productivity and participation, and capital accumulation (34-42). These comments remind me of Bourdieu's arguments. Fiske approves of Bourdieu's ideas about cultural capital. He says, "acquired cultural capital is that produced by the educational system and consists of the knowledge and critical appreciation of a particular set of texts, 'the canon,' in literature, art, music and *now, increasingly film*" (32, emphasis added). Accordingly, the cultural capital of art film fans is acquired by educational system as well.

We may say, while we do the research on "fans," we are somewhat researching the lifestyle of people, fascinated with a certain text. The domestic sociologist scholar on lifestyle Wei-Gong Liu (劉維公) declares that while people stylize their life, they are constructing their viewpoints towards people, things and objects in their life world (10). He introduces and elaborates upon German lifestyle sociologists well in his articles. As he indicates, the upsurge of lifestyle studies appeared in German sociological field since 1980s. These lifestyle scholars wished to adopt a viewpoint close to life world to do research on modern people's characteristics of lifestyle. German sociologists not only discover such classical lifestyle sociologists as Max Weber and George Simmel but grasp thoroughly and blend elaborately Bourdieu's masterpiece on lifestyle, *Distinction*, with their own studies. Nevertheless, unlike Bourdieu, these German sociologists think lifestyle should not be regarded as a life mode determined by class or class position (12). Liu summarizes what German sociologists argue, "lifestyle may be a life mode with image presenting and aesthetic experience" (19). For him, every activity in one's life is filled with a complicated and abstract sign. One's image presented by lifestyle is sure to have a gap from him/her and the real, for lifestyle may be disguised and imitated to become one's façade. If we think the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu inspires people to understand the distinction of lifestyle by his *Distinction*, then the

German sociologist Gerhard Schulze inspires people to realize the aesthetic experience in lifestyle by his *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft: Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart* (19).

Bourdieu argues that lifestyle is produced by agents' delicate action and recognition, namely, habitus, not by a random behavior. Lifestyle is not merely a distinctive sign, gathering people with the same taste and excluding those with different tastes to construct a collective identity, but a means of reproducing vested power, that is, a means of symbolic struggle. Moreover, all the people in the social field have their own related positions; their disposition--their accustomed ways of thinking and behaving--is the result of themselves interacting with their social positions (Liu 14-5). In this social space, everyone occupies a position. A field refers to a context of relation and a struggle position, namely, the context people invest their cultural capital and practice their habitus (Brooker 84).

According to Bourdieu, Bonnewitz indicates four different forms of capital that may construct social space: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital--among which cultural capital has the greatest influence on cultural activities, such as film viewing. Bonnewitz explains, cultural capital is the totality of knowledge and abilities, inherited by educational system or family (Bonnewitz 73).

In the social field, distance exists in different positions. While their agents present distance through practices, it will become the difference of different agents, which is how Bourdieu observes the relationship between lifestyle and social world. Lifestyle and taste are distinctive sign to show the difference (Liu 15; Bourdieu, 1984:174). Bourdieu declares, "every sort of taste ... unites and separates;" people build a sense of belongingness inside with people having the same lifestyle and taste, and refuse the people having different tastes to show their difference (56). It is no wonder some art film fans refuse firmly the film taste of those who do not see films but Hollywood movies. "Taste classifies....Social subjects.... distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make" (Bourdieu, 1984: 6). By means of different film taste, art film fans differentiate themselves from general public by emphasizing



their particular cultural taste and cultural hierarchy, for cultural taste may distinct. Bourdieu observes, “the real principle of preferences is taste” (177). One’s habitus has a great influence on his/her taste and lifestyle in many aspects.

Speaking of lifestyle, we should not omit its relationship with habitus, for it is transformed into a visible and low-keyed lifestyle while being externalized in actions and in life (Hsuan-Yang Kao 高宣揚 432). According to Bourdieu, habitus has much to do with lifestyle, tastes and ways of consumption (432). One’s personality is based on his/her habitus, acquired by long-term socialization and learning, and having influence on one’s preference and taste (Bonnewitz 101). “The habitus is not only a structuring structure...but also a structured structure” by means of internalization within the structure (Bourdieu, 1984: 170).

### 3.3 Metaphor of “Dreams”

Movie going resembles entering a dreamland, especially seeing movies in the cinema, for the dark movie theater provides film audience with a place of dreaming to dream a dream and enter the dreamland. We may say that dreamers and film audience have a close blood relationship (Flitterman-Lewis 185).

We stay in a dark room, which makes movie watching similar to dreaming, states Flitterman-Lewis (196). Mutual interactions of many factors enable the audience to feel that he or she is dreaming the dreamland or situation on screen. To make audience believe the narrative of the film is their own stories, the fantasy of the movie should hide its origin; that is, the real dreamer, the playwright or director, is required to be concealed, letting the story seem like audiences’ own story and the screen image look like their own desire, narrated and imagined freely by themselves (198-201). In the movie theater, everyone is able to dream his/her own dream as he/she wishes; everyone can be a dream interpreter after awaking from dreams, following his/her own imagination to interpret whatever dreamlands he/she beholds.

Flitterman-Lewis indicates that psychological theories attempt to analogize films with

dreamlands to figure out the relationship among films, and between film and dreamers. They try to discover the transformation process of the image, story and dreams during our sleep (185). Besides, Freud thinks whatever is in the unconscious fails to become conscious owing to the censorship unless it appears in a different pattern to breach the censorship. The transformation process of dreams from being apparent to being concealed is condensation and displacement, the two main functions of dreams. The latter means that the original thing is replaced by another new thing, an idea by another related idea. Due to the displacement, the dreamland presented is far different from the original ideas. If it works with a common element between these two to come into the dreamland, then, displacement can help urge condensation (Freud, 2000b: 220-37).

The presented dreamland after being condensed are closer to the original ideas, compared with those after displacement, for condensation resembles refinement and metaphor in poetic or artistic language. It enables ideas in the unconscious to breach the censorship and appear in the conscious ness. Emotion impressed in the unconscious may breach the censorship by a circuitous way and by a replace idea (Freud, 2000a: 320-33). Such circuitous ways as symptoms, daydreams, dreams, fantasy, games and art works, can show their real emotions; the production of art films is also one of them. Directors of dreamlike art films present ideas and feelings by indirect and metaphorical manners, or even substitute an irrelevant element for the original thing or replace the language form of an element for another form (Freud, 2000c: 237). Films, therefore, resemble dreams, which require a highly skillful interpretation, association and imagination.

Films in the film festivals of all sorts and Taiwanese films, especially starting from “Taiwan New Cinema,” are mostly art films, dreamlike films, which require film critics’ interpretation, to conjecture from the presentation what elements are replaced and to imagine the real themes of the films. Yuo-Long Kuo thinks that Taiwan New Cinema stresses artistic creation, autobiography, memory in childhood, homeland background and personal life

experiences, and it subverts Hollywood film language and convention frequently. Most of these films lack dramatic attraction and contradiction, which thus keeps audiences from identifying with the plots, and which makes them complain about the films to be bored and unintelligible (Kuo 1). Most audiences abandon the films, yet such kind of films, including Taiwanese films and art films, still appeal to art film fans, delighted to analyze these abstract dreamlike films. I will also utilize ideas of dreams as the metaphor to discuss alternative movies, art film fans and their spectatorship.

To sum up with the above-mentioned ideas, this thesis attempts to indicate the following arguments as my research spindle.

1. Although art film fans always emphasize their uniqueness and reason, they are actually like fans in other fields, such as pop music fans, belonging to fan culture groups, and adoring a specific text, films, to an excessive extent. The difference between the two is that art film fans show their distinction from others with low-key lifestyle, insisting on their uniqueness and differences from other fans.
2. Art film fans do not have the ability to appreciate films by nature; rather, they become art film fans by accumulating cultural capital in several film-related learning and watching fields. Hence, they are capable of deciphering dreams and interpret dreamlike films and familiar with the secret skills to access dreamlands as well. Their acquired habitus and aesthetic tastes influence their spatial feelings.
3. The distinction of “art films” and “commercial movies” is merely a strategic means of distributors, called “niche-market.” Most non-official festivals also pretend to be artistic activities as a way of commercial distribution. The more art film fans insist on the strict distinction of the two, the less they will accept the multi-cultural juxtaposition of Xi-Men-Ding. After seeing movies, awaking from dreams and reentering the real world in Xi-Men-Ding, art film fans who think of “art” as the only high culture feel incompatible

with the space, forgetting their multiple figures similar to others---fans, consumers, citizens, etc.

#### IV. Research Methodology

Besides the in-depth interviews for art film fans, film workers in cinemas and youngsters in Xi-Men-Ding, my research methods contain field observation in Xi-Men-Ding, the text analysis of related articles, and Internet and BBS discussions.

In-depth interview is the most important method adopted in my research, which is a data collecting method, the most frequently utilized in qualitative research. According to Langellier, Hall, Cook and Fonow, the basic principles of qualitative in-depth interview ought to be as follows (qtd in Jiun-Chung Cheng 42):

1. Everyday life experiences are emphasized.
2. The relationship between consciousness and action should be explored from interviewees' remarks during the interview.
3. Interview ought to be regarded as a interaction process, which is intersubjectivity between researchers and researching objects.
4. Researchers should have self-reflexivity towards their own positions.

By means of in-depth interviews of art film fans, therefore, this research attempts to explore art film fans' everyday life experiences, fandom stories, their preference, taste, and their spatial feelings towards Xi-Men-Ding. Also, by interaction with art film fans during the interviews, I would like to analyze their nonverbal expressions, such as their speaking moods.

As for the way of searching for interviewees, in the beginning, I stayed at the entrance of the art house in CMPC'S Majestic Theater, waiting for the end of a film to ask audience for interviews. It did not work well, for most audiences were in a hurry having no time for my abrupt interview. Moreover, I could only search for one interviewee at one time; after the

interview finished, I had to stay at the entrance again, waiting for the end of another film. This method is no longer adopted. Searching for interviewees in the film clubs in universities is quite a good way, for they are the beginning fields for most film fans to get in touch with films of all kinds. Besides, they are also a specific access for cultivation of art film fans; therefore, film clubs center the most art film fans.

Furthermore, I search for interviewees in Graduate School of Filmmaking of Taipei National University of the Arts, for those who study in a filmmaking graduate school must be far more interested in and crazy for films than others. In addition, BBS of NTU is a remarkably popular discussion station, the film station of which is a required part for all art film fans to read, and where many film fans share with others their film critiques and reactions. Some fans even set up newspaper station to write their own film critiques and notes. These film fans, hence, may be my targeted interviewees as well. Moreover, I asked for volunteer interviewees on film station of BBS to have in-depth interviews with me.

I did not set the age limit of interviewees. To my interest, most volunteer interviewees are in their twenties or thirties. As students having more leisure time and young people not having worked for a long time, they still keep their keen enthusiasm towards films, which has not been decreased by busy work and family or marriage. They are more active to spend so long a time having in-depth interviews and sharing their experiences and thoughts with me.

## Chapter II The Habitus and Fields of Alternative Film Audiences

I am very particular about things. When I'm ready to go to a film, I'll take a shower. I'll make sure that I have clean clothes and underwear 'cause I don't want me uncomfortable during the film, 'cause I want it to be a perfect experience. And the other thing I do before the film, I go to the restroom even I'm going late. I try to go the bathroom to wash my glasses. It's terrible. I should get an eye operation because my glasses never get completely clean....When I go to the theater, it's cold, but you will be. I'll go to the bathroom, if possible, I'm going to change clothes and put on my shirts and sweater. (Bill, in 2003 "Cinemanía")

If I see less than 5 movies, I will feel lost....I don't have free time during the day. I can't have to go to bathroom during the day when I running around. I'm running from one movie to the next frequently, like running out of the theater and jumping on the train to get to the next one....I don't want to eat a lot of beans, desserts or meals full of vegetables. That will spill up the disaster of the founding day. Too many vegetables, too much fiber. That actually changes bathroom schedule.

I don't go to weddings. I don't go to funerals. I don't visit friends in the hospital if I have screens to go. I make people closely understand that they can't expect that.

It's beyond obsession. I don't know what it is. There is no word for it, so you can call us "cinemanía." (Jack, in 2003 "Cinemanía")

New York is the biggest city as well as a cultural center in America, with about 200 theaters, 200 libraries, and 100 cinemas. Such plentiful cultural resources cultivate cultural aficionados of all fields, including film fans. Bill and Jack, the above-mentioned film fans, are two examples in New York, called "Cinemanía." Taipei has the most theaters and cultural resources in Taiwan; film fans, therefore, mostly gather in Taipei. In this chapter, I would like

to present art film fans' characteristics, habitus, lifestyle, formation fields, etc. They are not born art film fans, but gradually become art film fans in some specific fields.

## I. Excessive Film Audiences

A fan is a sort of “excessive audience” (Sherry Jean 18-27). Art film fans are therefore an excessive film audience. Compared with general audience, their craziness and enthusiasm towards films is excessive, in inner feelings and in outer behaviors. In this part, I will discuss film fans' great invest to films and their life practices.

### 1.1 Dipped in Films, Devoted to Collection

Art film fans' favorite leisure activities are movie watching, not only Taiwanese good movies, but those around the world. They endeavor to see movies, one film after another, as long as it is a good one interesting them. Their craziness for films shows not only in movie going but also in film-related objects. Art film fans are dipped in films and devoted to collection film objects as well.

#### 1.1.1 Dipped in Films

Seeing a movie repeatedly and being dipped in films to one's heart's content are many art film fans' habits. As Jenkins' first level of fandom operation mode, “[f]ans adopt a distinctive mode of reception” (209). Namely, as addicted to movies, fans view programs faithfully and see films repeatedly, wishing to experience viewing pleasure over and over again, expecting to get different ideas from various angles, or hoping to discuss related topics with other fans. Consequently, they are required to pay attention to detailed parts of films easily ignored by general audiences in order to show their fandom. For instance, Lazycat has seen the film “The Barbarian Invasions” for five times, for he identifies with the plot and the roles in this film; his relationship with his father resembles that in this film---the hardships of

communication between the father and the son. For the first time, he was deeply touched by the plot. He recalled his situation with his father again and again; for the second time, he saw it from the angle of his father, third time of he himself. For the forth time, he saw it again objectively as a complete outsider. For the fifth time, he experienced the relationship between father and son in the movie. After seeing this movie, he shared with his companions what was in his mind about this movie and the hardships of his long-term relationship with his father, and listened to what his friends shared him with about this film. Lazycat bought this DVD thereafter, so as to see it anytime as he wishes, and he even hopes to play this film for his father and to share it with him.

In the documentary film, “Cinemia,” an art film fan, Harvey, sees each of his favorite movies over twenty times, being familiar with all the plots and even remembering the exact duration of each film. Eric collects many videotapes and is dipped in movies repeatedly at home. Seeing movies, he sings with them and reads the lines with the characters without fail.

Those who are dipped in films not only see one film again and again, but mostly see a great deal of different movies. They choose what to see according to directors and topics. Kai Jong (凱蓉) says, “it is more expectant and appealing to see a bad movie by my favorable directors than to see a good movie by a disfavoring director.” Some film fans see all the films of some specific directors, some specific topics; some prefer documentary films, some love several kinds. They see one film after another; once they get addicted to going to the movies or to being dipped in films, they cannot free themselves from them hereafter. Lazycat finds that “movie seeing is a kind of poison; people should not touch it, once touching it, they will absolutely get addicted to it. “My ecstasy is hard to get but from two resources: one from drugs, the other from good movies, the ecstasy of understanding its knowledgeable essence as having celestial broth, as taking drugs,” says Valley. We may, accordingly, see how much art film fans are crazy about films.

“Seeing movies according to film genres is pretty much for entertainment and killing



leisure time, while seeing movies according to film directors resembles a pilgrimage. Some specific directors' films are only played in film festivals," says Shiao-Feng (小豐). Film festivals held in Taipei are mostly organized according to directors and topics, which conforms to art film fans' film choosing habits. The annual film festivals appeal to island-wide film fans to take part in. During the ordinary time without film festivals, they also endeavor to buy and collect DVD, VCD or videotapes of their favorite movies and by their adored directors, in some shops or at Amazon. While they cannot see them in big screen of movie theaters, they may still see them at home and suck them over and over again.

### 1.1.2 Devoted to Film Collections

Besides collecting film videotapes, VCD and DVD that enable film fans to see their favorite movies repeatedly, they also collect some other film related objects, such as film stubs, posters, post cards, program brochures, film periodicals, soundtracks, and so forth.

Why do art film fans collect film objects? Shiao-Mi (小米) collects them for "memory." Lazycat collects film stubs so that he might "remember my [his] life, to recall films themselves as a mementos. The film stubs are remarkably meaningful for me and parts of my life," he says. The reasons art film fans collect film objects may be categorized into three:

1. Meaning of objects: Objects take a record of life and growth as a means of recalling.
2. Series and completeness of objects: Collectors gain a sense of control and of satisfaction by collecting a series of objects.
3. Rareness and market values of objects: Collectors acquire a sense of achievement by possessing a unique object, and they gain the market values with the rareness and uniqueness of objects.

In the documentary film "Cinemanía," a film fan Jack orders ten boxes of film books from a bookstore at a time even though he has already a room of film books. In addition, Tina Bonacore, a staff in the New York Art Museum, is interviewed about a special experience

tearing Mrs. Roberta's film stub, she says,

I was alone, around the corner and had seen Roberta bursting through the door, running in a sweat, in a panic. She couldn't wait to get into the doors. I asked her for tickets. And I saw how rude she was. She was coming right towards me and she wasn't going to give up her ticket. I say, "You must not be entering. You must give me your ticket."...I was just running out of my patience. I took it and I ripped it, gave her the stub and say next. She launched upon me. She tried to choke me. She obviously didn't know what she was doing. She was just so angry, just as I was ripping her bible or something. I didn't know how much pressure that ticket was. But I think she didn't say I am evil; I think she did say *I was ruining up her life*. I was a terrible thing. How could I? And I found out *she had kept up every single ticket stub in her entire life, probably when the time she was a young girl seeing movies*. (2003 "Cinemia," emphasis added)

Collecting a single object is no enough. It should always be a series of objects, even a complete series of objects that you may plan to achieve it. This is why the state of owning itself is always both satisfying and disappointing no matter what people own; people may expand it by a complete series, it is thus also anxious (Baudrillard 95). Roberta has treasured all of her every single film stub ever since her youth when she started seeing movies, which is an important part of her life, taking a record of her life and her growth process, and she acquires pleasure and a sense of control through it. As a result, while her cherish film stub is torn by the ticket staff, it seems that her life is ruined, her long-term completeness of collecting film stubs is damaged, her pleasure and her sense of control over stubs are deprived of in the meanwhile. What she does to the staff resembles that she fights against an enemy hysterically while her life is severely threatened and thus feels increasingly anxious.

In New York, there are such stub-attached fans as Roberta; in Taipei, we also have ones such as Lazycat (懶貓), regarding films as his second life. He says,

*Film stub collecting is a significant memory and record of films, in memory of whatever movies I have seen, and by means of recalling movies themselves....Now, I put all the film stubs in a huge paper bag, in a mess, not well arranged. I hope some day I can rearrange them in the order of date, glued in a notebook one after another so that I can read them easily (my emphasis).*

The same as Roberta, Lazycat's complete stub starts with his first movie. Each one takes a record of his growth, his film life and interests, becoming the basis of his memory.

Many film fans have a habit of collecting film objects. For example, Jonathan collects hundreds of film post cards; Shiao-Mi collects all the film programs and brochures. She says,

I take three program brochures for the annual film festivals, one for marking what directors, movies and times played, with a lot of marks; another for carrying with me. These two will definitely become used and dirty with folds. Therefore, the other one, the brand new one, is for collection....Yet the program of Golden Horse Film Festival last year should start to sell. Though it is sold only ten NT dollars, I still bought just one, instead of three.

The authorities concerned plan to sell the program at 10 dollars for consumers with two goals: one to upgrade the program printing, the other one to encourage consumers to cherish resources, not to waste them because of their being free of charge. According to the case of Shiao-Mi, they have achieved their target.

As for collecting programs, Kai-Jong has different opinions. She says,

*It is only meaningful to collect marked and drawn programs, with plenty of signs and folds. With marks, I may know what movies I have seen before, what movies I was interested in before. Folds of programs represent imprints of my attending film festivals and records of my studying film programs before. Therefore, one is enough....With this program and its film introduction and description, I may go to*

see the movies I have missed during the film festivals before (emphasis added).

Kai-Jong seemed to meet the expectations of the authorities concerned that audiences should not waste resources. Speaking of collections, Jean Baudrillard thinks that beyond the practical function of objects, they have become a meaningful object at a specific time, linked deeply with subjects. They are, therefore, not only an object with resistance but a chateau where I can make an order, and an object referring to me, a piece of fortune, a passion (95). For Kai-Jong, these “marked and drawn programs, with plenty of signs and folds,” record the activities and memories of a past specific time, namely, during a certain film festivals, as well as record “her” passion towards films at that time. Being her mementos of recalling film festivals, film programs are meaningful to her, recording her life.

Film fans’ collections are not necessarily concrete objects; rather, accumulating movie seeing experiences is another way of collecting, such as Shiao-Feng fond of terror films and Yao-Bo (堯伯) fond of sci-fi movies. They hope to “see all the films of some genres and some directors;” that is, to collect a complete series of film seeing experiences. Yao-Bo says,

*I see all the films of my favorite genres, no matter whether they have good words of mouth or not. It has become a collection habit....Besides, I will see all the films of my favorite directors as well, even if they do not have good words of mouth or even if they are not good movies, I will still go to see them, to see what new works my favorite directors have made and to see what is new in them (my emphasis).*

Compared with general public, these film fans, dipped in films and devoted to film collections, are indulgent film audiences, whose habitus, taste and spatial aesthetics are also different from general public.

## 1.2 Habitus, Taste and Spatial Aesthetics

Theaters should stop selling popcorn. Selling popcorn is the most, is the worst thing that the art cinema could do to its art loving audience. (Bill, in 2003 “Cinemanía”)

I can't let people ruin the film. I have to rape the food out of somebody's hand and throw it on the floor. There is no alternative. If you don't, get up and beat the person up and threaten them or something. Then, you actually have the film ruined. You have the right to kill them. You have the right to do whatever you need to get them stop. Killing is not a very practical solution because when the film ends, maybe before ends, you'll get arrested. (Jack, in 2003 "Cinemanian")

If I see commercial movies, I always buy some food and eating and seeing. If I see art films, I never buy foods, for I have to concentrate on films (Valley).

Art film fans have plentiful habits, rules and preferences about film viewing space. For example, the interviewees share common characteristics. In order not to disturb their movie seeing, they turn off mobile phones and they never eat or drink anything, especially while seeing alternative films. For it is the space just for film viewing. Food smell and eating noise will certainly damage their movie seeing mood, and stop them from concentrating on movies and from getting into the imaginary film world. Even they will hold back their need for urination until the movie ends; only after the movie completely ends will they leave their seats. Such ritual behaviors set off their art cinema going more sacred, which differs from commercial movie viewing with the goal of seeking for entertainment.

Art film fans disgust people walking within the theaters; food smell and noise of plastic bags also make them mad. They wish all the audiences to obey their film seeing rules as well. If they fail to follow the conventions, most art film fans rage over them. They cannot tolerate people's talking in the theater. Momo scolded people to stop talking for several times. For talking and eating will absolutely destroy the holiness of their cinema going.

Art film fans' habitus have great influence on their spatial feelings and preferences. Momo, grown up in an artistic family, says,

I got used to quiet environment. We never watched TV in my childhood. After

dinner, all our family got together playing the piano and singing. We took turns at playing the piano while others sang songs. My aunt had painting meetings at home regularly. She invited painter friends to our home for painting, poetry and calligraphy. I helped them rub the ink stick and learned painting from my aunt.... These family factors probably affected my majoring in fine arts subsequently.

Being influenced imperceptibly by Momo's upbringing surroundings, she got to love literature and art. Her family background full of elite culture has formed her habitus. As Bourdieu argues, knowledge and taste tend to construct a connection with obvious characteristics and distinctively to relate to educational level (1997: 266). Therefore, people who love literature, painting, art and classical music are much related to each other. It is also in fine art courses that Momo has acquired the decoding competence for films. She explains, "the training in the fine art department enables me to have a good command of film composition, color, and filmmaking techniques. Seeing a lot of films also helps my fine art creation." The family background and school education not only shape her habitus and taste, but also affect her spatial preferences and aesthetic taste.

It has been quiet but with music in my family since childhood. I can do anything by myself quietly--- reading, painting, etc. I hate crowded and noisy surroundings but prefer broad space, especially artistic space and theaters transformed from national cultural buildings embedded with historical values. It isn't necessarily large but should be mysterious, where people may calm down concentrating on seeing films. Art films particularly require such kind of spatial atmosphere. Zhongshan Hall, with a cultural and historical value, has a broad square in the front and few people there. Unless you see Hollywood movies, you don't need such kind of historical atmosphere....There should be cafés near art cinemas so that audiences may sit down pondering over the seen art films or discussing with friends.

The cultural and historical space in SPOT-Taipei Film House<sup>4</sup> and Zhongshan Hall appeal a lot to Momo. The SPOT Taipei Film House, a third-class historical site, formerly the residency of the U.S. Ambassador, and now a historical and cultural spot, is a reused building organized by the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government. It is presently operated by the Taiwanese Film and Culture Society, led by Hou Hsiao-Hsien and officially opened on November 10, 2002. On the right side is Spot Cinema, transformed from a garage of the residency. Spot Cinema having 88 seats is a paragon of high-quality movie theaters and art houses” (Chih-Chien Tang 湯志堅, 2002: V15). Besides Spot Cinema, Spot Taipei Film House has an Eslite Bookstore on film, C25 Coffee Shop, the exhibition gallery, and the Sixth Avenue, an art salon, etc. Such places are fields representing cultural capital and artistic taste. Therefore, after the opening, this artistic space on film culture becomes a resort for art film fans and appeal to many cultural elites requiring high taste and high quality.

Zhongshan Hall used to be full of official atmosphere and now is gradually transformed into civil cultural space under the reuse program of historical buildings (Feng-Ming Chen 陳芳明 30-35). Zhongshan Hall was announced in 1992 to be a second-class historical site, as SPOT-Taipei Film House; both were organized by the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government to become important cultural space in Taipei from reused historical monuments. Taipei Film Festival in 2002 and in 2004 took place in Zhongshan Hall. Cultural courses and artistic events are frequently held in the square of Zhongshan Hall and in Fortress Café on its second floor. Citizens from all over the city corners are expected to become artistic residents by means of such cultural activities (“China Times”, 2004-10-28, C5). Besides, by the porch of Zhongshan Hall stands a café, where many people have coffee

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<sup>4</sup> There are regularly six screenings every day. The films shown there are aimed for fine films with alternative viewpoints and cultural diversity, offering audience new viewing experiences and visions, artistically distinguish from the mainstream Hollywood films, with the hope that audiences may develop their own independent thinking and diversified film tastes. Additionally, the Society also organizes various film events at Spot, such as Directors highlight-interactive with the audience, Apprenticeship with the filmmaker workshop, DV Short film contest, the Taipei film Festival and the P.O.P. cinema, so that film fans may interact with directors and explore their creative thinking and that the filmmakers are able to reciprocally get the feedback from the audiences' viewpoints (Spot web site)

viewing performances in the square. Zhongshan Hall has recently become another culture-acquiring field and artistic leisure space.

Zhongshan Hall and Spot Taipei Film House are both historical sites with broad open space and cafés, whose theaters playing exclusively art films or festival films. They seem to be of complete cultural and elitist taste and therefore appeal to cultural elites with cultural capital. On the contrary, Xi-Men-Ding appeal to youngsters fond of popular culture instead of elite culture, is filled with local food vendors instead of coffee shops, and with various stores for popular commodities instead of Eslite Bookstore, and it is crowded and noisy without any quiet square. Such kind of space in Xi-Men-Ding is certainly against art film fans' habitus. Momo has negative feelings towards Xi-Men-Ding. She describes, "it is so crowded and noisy in Xi-Men-Ding, unless art films or film festivals take place there, I won't go there. If I have to go for film festivals, I leave immediately after films end and never linger there." Several art film fans have similar thoughts. Yao-Bo insists on his spatial preferences and habitus, "space and theaters in Xi-Men-Ding are all very dirty. I prefer Showtime Cinema in Lin-Sen North Road, which is much wider and cleaner, with good design and high level. I never go there except for film festivals or art films that only played there." Their spatial preferences and feelings come from their habitus; although they are passionate about films, they go to the movies in the frontier of Xi-Men-Ding in a low-key manner.

## II. Low-key Lifestyle

Although excessive film audiences are much crazier than general audience in loving films, such craziness is not expressed in an apparent way. They do not show their fandom through clear lifestyle, but in a low-key and recessive manner. Those film fans declaring an aesthetic taste of "art for art," often bear sublime film mission and request for perfect film specifications.



## 2.1 Film Mission

Those art film fans, enthusiastic about films, are often dipped in movies; they show their attachment on film objects as well. Although they see foreign films mostly, they still wish to see more good Taiwan films, through which they may explore more about their own culture and society. They are anxious, concerned and depressed about the recession of Taiwan film industry. Seeing Taiwan films more positively than general public, they bear sublime missions and expectations to promote Taiwan films and invigorate Taiwan film industry.

A filmmaker, Duck (鴨子), bears such missions for Taiwanese film industry and even seems to have a bitter feud with Hollywood movies. He is not willing to see Hollywood movies for the reason that Hollywood film industry destroys Taiwan film industry, saying “now, I do not see Hollywood movies anymore. I detest them. I know it is them that damage Taiwan film industry.”

Almost every art film fan hopes to have plenty of leisure time to see movies to their heart's content without having to worry about money. Duck could see movies for free for a long time; however, he gave up such treat then. Being a critic, he would try hard to avoid commercial power's interfering in his film critiques. He states,

I don't need to spend money on film tickets. I apply for membership cards to see movies, such as those in Taipei House. I was a critic and could see movies freely. Distributors announce the preview information to critics and the press. There are one or two preview rooms in Xi-Men-Ding if they know you. I also see previews of films for film festivals, needless of waiting in lines for tickets and buying tickets.

However, sometimes I wrote my true reactions about films and criticize films; the editors would ask me to modify and delete the critical sentences. Distributors would be angry, for negative critiques affected box office. That irritated me a lot. Gradually, I didn't go to see previews and write film critiques for them anymore.

Duck thinks that film critiques are supposed to be true feeling and analysis towards films; commercial power must not interfere critiques. He would rather give up the chances to see free movies than be bothered by external elements. He bears sublime missions for film industry. Since film marketing and box office interfere commercial film critiques from time to time, he insists on the loyalty of his film critiques of art films. With such great passion and mission towards films, he also puts it into practice as a volunteer. He says,

I write film critiques for “filmism”<sup>5</sup> without being paid frequently; I am just volunteer to do that, feeling that I have to do something for film industry. And because it has no pay, I can write my authentic critiques and real reactions for films.....I even went to the film workshop of Tso-Chi Chang (張作冀), telling him I was willing to work for him as a volunteer without pay. And I did work for a period of time, and even went to help stick his posters. I am 36 years old. Being the first son in my family, I still volunteer to do such kinds of things under the great pressure and expectations of my family.

Most film fans feel sorrowful for the poor box office of national films and the depression of the domestic filmmaking, and have their own opinions and analysis. For one thing, in the opinion of Yao-Bo, there is a severe shortage of budget for Taiwanese filmmaking, and the box office is limited in a certain audiences in some places, unlike film market of Hollywood movies, which is universal. For another thing, Shiao-Feng observes that

Only the art-loving youth still get involved in filmmaking now, yet all they want to make is high-quality films, like art films. Most Taiwanese films are art films, supported merely by few audiences, and therefore have a failure in box office....Consequently, people should not ask them not to make art films but ask some more commercial directors out to make commercial movies....There should be all kinds of movies. Yin-Ping Chu (朱延平) didn't make progress; he always make films

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<sup>5</sup> It is a free e-mail paper with abundant in-depth film critiques, festival film introduction and film information.

that way, so no one would like to see his commercial movies. Korean film industry makes much progress, why cannot Taiwan make it?

Almost every art film fan interviewee is interested in the topics of the situation of Taiwan film industry. They have many viewpoints, concerns and expectations; they wish that domestic film industry would improve increasingly. They support domestic movies frequently and urge people to do the same as them. It seems that they bear a mission and concerns towards national film industry. Nevertheless, what is paradox is that if Taiwanese films will be popular with most audiences, it means that its film style should be resemble Hollywood movies, which is far from being art films fans' preferred alternative tastes.

Plum (梅子) and Champignon (香菇), working in Taipei and coming from Kaohsiung, felt excited to learn that a film library has been built in their hometown. “ Kaohsiung has always been a cultural desert; whatever movies we want to see are only played in Taipei, never in Kaohsiung. Now we have a film library; it may be called an oasis in this desert, ” they sighed. However, after curiously visiting this library, with disappointment they found,

This film library, subject to Kaohsiung City Government, is merely a building, lack of film disks, books, and so on. Furthermore, film librarians are appointed as public servants. They are not film specialists, but manage this film library and hold film festivals. No wonder they cannot do things well. I yearn to work in that film library, hoping that I can do something to effectively improve the film environment in Kaohsiung. However, I can't get in to the position; I fail to work there.

Plum and Champignon worry about the poor film environment in Kaohsiung and bears a sublime mission. They hope to return to their hometown to put their dreams into practice.

Art film fans' habitus shown by their missions towards films is a type of social and cultural concerns, coming from their seeing many movies of special topics and issues such as ethnicity, feminism and politics for a long time, which produces a sense of human concerns

and human responsibilities. “Art films represents manifold cultural appearances and deeply explore socio-cultural issues of all sorts. Seeing movies frequently enables me to think independently, know more cultural information, experience others’ living situations, and then rethink about those in Taiwan,” observed Momo. Through movies, art film fans get into touch with some issues hardly discussed in the daily life, and have the chance to rethink the social and cultural phenomenon and political situations. Moreover, feeling excited about the great and abundant foreign movies, they feel it necessary to see some movies on Taiwanese culture, yet there are few Taiwanese films owing to the recession of domestic filmmaking. Art film fans, hence, bears a sublime mission and a sense of responsibility as intellectuals, with the expectations that film environment should be improved and filmmaking be flourishing.

## 2.2 Request for Perfect Film Specifications

Art film fans’ tastes for films are subjective; their request for perfect film specifications is picky and persistent. Besides, they cannot tolerate any flaws in film itself, the process of playing movies. Art film fans love seeing movies in film festivals for the big screen and the original version. The DVD or the films played in other occasions are mostly trimmed version, because of the long duration or of the forbidden content. The version played in film festivals are certainly played in whole without trimming and destroying directors’ original works. The circulated DVDs are frequently criticized as well, especially in some DVD discussion stations of BBS, where film fans compare specifications of several film versions and criticize them in detail. One example is as follows.

Take Ho Hsiao-hsien’s “a City of Sadness,” a Taiwanese film, for example. ERA published its DVD carelessly--of terrible quality, with wrong length-width proportion and even without foreign subtitles. However, it is a Japanese company that produces the best version of this film....The copyrighted DVD of “*Rosetta*” in Taiwan compressed the screen proportion into four to three, where all the characters and scenes were deformed, which was thus mistaken as a pirated version

by a foreign DVD criticism station in BBS. That is really shameful. (Shih-Lun Chang 張世倫, in *Watch Media*)

Shiao-Feng, who requested severely for perfect film specifications and quality, shared the same feeling with him:

Whenever I want to buy DVDs, I always pay attention to its aspect ratio. For I cannot endure the films the both sides of which were cut. I care much about whether it is original ratio; that is what directors have originally made. However, it is said that many domestic audiences cannot get used to the wide-screen films with two up-and-down black bars but to the television ratio. Therefore, film distributors cut the both sides of DVD films to satisfy most audience, which is really annoying. For example, I hate the domestic version of “Hanging Garden” because I can’t stand its ratio and therefore spent much money ordering a foreign version in a foreign wide web. My friends think me weird when knowing it.

To illustrate the screen ratio problem, Shiao-Feng provided me with several shots taken from a DVD film, *Green Snake*.

As for the screen ratio problem, I like to take Tsui Hark’s “*Green Snake*” for example. I saw it on Videoland Movie Channel, the full-screen version on TV.



Several shots were really funny. The title was shown on the right side, so in the full-screen version, we could only see the English title. At first blush, I thought it an international version played in Taiwan (see in Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 The whole picture is the original shot. The white dotted line part is the full-screen shot played on TV; only English title is shown while Chinese title is cut out.

Then, Green Snake and White Snake had a quarrel and stood in both side of the



shot, leaving Hsu-Shien hesitating in the middle and not knowing which one to follow. But the both side parts of the shot are cut out; we cannot see the two Snakes but Hsu-Shien alone talking to the both sides of my television set. That is really funny (see in Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2 The whole picture is the original shot. The white dotted line part is the full-screen shot played on TV; the both side parts, two Snakes, are cut out, only Hsu-Shien seen talking to the television set left and right.



Later, Hsu-Shien was gone, leaving Green Snake and White Snake confronting each other. Because of the cutting, it ironically becomes a rarely-seen “landscape shot,” which only appears in art films but now in Tsui Hark’s “*Green Snake*” (see in Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3 The whole shot is a wide-screen one while the white dotted line part is a full-screen one. The two snakes are cut out, forming an ironical “landscape shot.”

A request for perfect film specifications is a common characteristic for art film fans. There are a great many film fans such as Shiao-Feng who illustrates the flaws with pictures in DVD discussion station of BBS, some of whom may be even considered experts. What they do requires much passion, patience and observation for films.

Nevertheless, this great flaw to be blame is merely circulated among his film-fan friend by E-mail in a low-key manner. Shih-Lun Chang’s critical article pressed in *Watch Media* is also articulated and discussed within the small group of film fans. There are many similar discussion stations on DVD film specifications criticize and discuss such problems, in a low-keyed way without arousing outside resonance. For most audience prefer traditional TV

full-screen aspect ratio of four to three rather than that of 16 to 9 with two up-and-down black bars; they consider the shot of the latter cut out and incomplete instead. On the contrary, art film fans wish to watch the wide-screen one of 16 to 9 and insist on the original complete shot; they cannot tolerate the incomplete full-screen shot of 4 to 3. To satisfy the general public, most distributed DVDs are divided into two versions, one for rent and one for sale; the former is full-screen, for DVD rental stores to content most audience, while the latter is wide-screen, for film fans to collect.

These recessive fans discuss eagerly DVD specification problems on BBS stations in a hubbub; even some fans wrote to awful movie renters to protest against such specification problems as incomplete shots. However, distributors always answer with an excuse that “that is what the directors have made.” For these protestants are too few to have any influence on it, and the renters always base DVD specifications on general public’s habits in distributing DVDs. The criticism and protests of these small groups of art film fans, therefore, fail to change anything.



### 2.3 Recessive Fans

I collect film objects like DVDs and posters with the hope that I will never forget the good movies I’ve seen. They will remind me of the good movies afterwards.

While seeing these articles, I feel myself a fan of some certain directors. I know in my mind that these objects belong to my own style (Valley).

No matter how crazy art film fans are for movies, they just keep it in mind, without showing it to anyone. There are few fields for art film fans to manifest their fandom and few media to report their activities. Furthermore, their preference and interests in movies tend to be recessive and do not show out; they seem to be voiceless. For one thing, whenever stars come to Taiwan, all the Press people rush to report live everything about them. Nevertheless, such annual events as Taipei Film Festivals or the phenomena that many film fans wait in

long line for movies, seldom attract the Press to report on. Compared with the former, the latter appears to be much more recessive, as if it were merely a self-considered grand event within art film fans and it weren't worth others' while to pay attention to.

Film festivals are not a habitual activity, only a few ones throughout a year. Only at these times would a large number of art film fans show up together, yet these film festivals and fans are rarely reported in the mainstream Press. Moreover, the smaller-scale film festivals would be ignored more. Merely art film fans participate in these activities with great passion but secretly and in low-keyed manner. As for them, these film festivals of all scales are big deals in their everyday life but arouse little resonance in general public. Moreover, film activities held in Spring Cinema, Majesty Theater or Zhong-Shan Hall, located in the frontier of Xi-Men-Ding, merely appeal to art film fans to attend in the marginal space and in a low-key manner.

For another part, art film fans' low-key lifestyle is a visible and implicit lifestyle. Art film fans' lifestyle is exactly such kind of visible and implicit lifestyle (Hsuan-Yang Kao 432). It is what Bourdieu means by "ascetic disposition." As for intellectuals, he finds, "activities such as... 'art' cinemas... are in a sense governed by the pursuit of maximum 'cultural profit' for minimum economic cost, which implies renunciation of all ostentatious expense and all gratifications other than those given by symbolic appropriation of the work" (1984: 269-70). Those people whose lifestyles focus on cultural capital do not think that life pleasure ought to be obtained by materials or luxury but by the simplest way with lowest cost to achieve the great spiritual pleasure. For example, when the programs are free, some film fan took three; while it cost ten, she just bought one.

As I have mentioned before, art film fans are often dipped in films and treasure film collections secretly with special meanings for them. They do not have obvious lifestyle exteriorly; there is no chance to express their film interests and preference and they don't do it purposely. They keep it in a low-key manner. Take an example of Jonathan. He said,



I never tell other people on purpose I love alternative movies. So, they do not know my interest. While I am a graduate school student, people in the same lab do not know it. For when I was going to the film festivals, I used to say “I am leaving; Byebye!” instead of “I am going to the movies” or “I am going to a film festival.” Now, my colleagues in the same office do not know my fondness of films, either.

Nevertheless, in an appropriate moment when art film fans express some messages or remarks with expertise casually or purposely, even a low-keyed and implicit lifestyle could reveal some hints for others to guess art film fans’ special interest, taste and preference. For instance, Kai-Jong said,

I don’t tell people my viewpoints and critiques about films on seeing them. Most of my classmates love Hollywood movies; no one knows that I prefer art films and that I have seen a lot of films. When we were in class as seniors, our professor talked about a film I was very interested in. While I expressed my viewpoints about it in response to the professor, all of them felt surprised and learned that I could utter some different, unique and deep opinions about movies.

Kai-Jong is ordinarily a veiled film fan; she did not reveal her being an art film fan only until the specific moment when she uttered “some different, unique and deep opinions.” Lazycat recalls that during film festivals he often meets some familiar people whom he is never acquainted with and never talks to, but they know that they are all art film fans and film festivals goers. Besides, he would buy and utilize film festival souvenir notebook, according to which other film fans would know that he is a film festival lover. For he can recognize others’ being film fans if he sees them use similar articles such as a certain film festival souvenir backpack. Thus, he may know that they share the same interest and belong to the same community. As art film fans’ are dipped in films and being secret and alone, they keep their fandom in a low-key way ordinarily and surprise other people only in a specific occasions. People sharing the same interests, therefore, resemble a semi-secret loose

community; they recognize each other by means of a certain clues and occasions.

Expressing remarks with expertise, haunting film festivals, and utilizing film festival souvenirs are a kind of lifestyle presentation. However, Wei-Gong Liu declares that one's lifestyle may be a life mode of one's presenting image and aesthetic experience (Wei-Gong Liu, 2001:19). All the daily activities are receivers of symbolic signs. One's image presented by lifestyle might have a gap with him or her, for lifestyle could be imitated, disguised and wrapped as one's façade (Liu 14). Hence, lifestyle presented by art film fans might be sometimes colored; namely, they wish to present purposely some sort of semiotic meaning.

Having few chances to show art film fans' lifestyle and few occasions to utter remarks presenting their special interests and taste, most art film fans go to see alternative films in a low-keyed way and choose their preferred movies subjectively. Although they wish to distinct themselves from general public who love Hollywood movies by seeing art films, as a matter of fact, they differentiate merely psychologically in a low-key manner by means of the film genre, not by distinctive lifestyle. For it is not easy to present the difference by distinctive lifestyle and moreover, there are few chances to. It is a passive low-key manner. They are dipped in films alone at home and devoted to their film collections in a low-key way.

## 2.4 Being Alone and Being Secret

### 2.4.1 Being Alone

Art film fans are not fond of socials. They might get together to see movies, but never get together to have fun or to know each other. (Eric, in 2003 "Cinemanía")

For most people, going to the movies is a social activity. For example, seeing a movie in a theater is a common form of initial date, for going to the movies is regarded as an ordinary and open social activity. Nevertheless, for most art film fans, going to the movies is a personal interest and part of life, not a social activity, different from mainstream movie going. Art film fans often go to the movies alone, especially alternative movies or film festivals,

which is an ordinary matter for most of them. For instance, Kai-Jong thought,

Being able to go to the movies alone is a real art film fan. Most people go to the art movies alone. Going to the movies is a personal matter, why should people go with others? Especially during film festivals, everyone is interested in different movies and their free time is also different.

Art film fans have difficulties going to the movies with friends because of different films and free time. Besides, there is another reason: most art film fans dislike social activities, dislike making friends in person, Kai-Jong and Jonathan think. Going to the movies can be a personal activity; thus, it is suitable for those who do not know how to socialize and who dislike socials. Kai-Jong and Jonathan both set up their own film newspaper stations on Internet, through which they get acquainted with other film fans, discussing films and sharing thoughts. Yet they both don't want to meet and chat face to face with other fans. Kai-Jong explained, "whatever we talk about is films; we may simply read and discuss these topics on Internet. What do we meet for? That's weird. We have nothing in common but interest in films." However, it is through the Internet that they both knew each other and shared their thoughts and film cahiers with each other. Subsequently, they fell in love.

As for the habit of going to the movies alone, Yao-Bo explained,

Art films are different from Hollywood movies, which has explicit appeals and topics; thus, every audience has similar feelings. On the contrary, art films do not. Audience has their different reactions and feelings; they see art films in their own way. Even in movie theaters, they seem to see movies alone. As a matter of fact, to see movies is to search for one's own sentiments.

Shiao-Feng has a similar opinion: "no matter many audience see movies together in the theaters or alone at home, it is both actually seeing movies alone." Momo also take it for granted to go to the movies alone. She states, "I like going to the movies alone, which is very

enjoyable. I can concentrate on movies. Seeing art films is a personal activity; as reading a book, you don't like to read a book together with others."

In order to confirm that a certain movie is meaningful and valuable to oneself, art film fans endeavor to "search for one's own sentiments" in the movie, to have different opinions from others, and to have some inner reactions and feelings. They do not want to have generalized and similar ideas as general public, or they think it time-wasting to see this movie. Most art film fans insist on having unique viewpoints and having their own taste and sentiments toward films. Hence, they go to the alternative movies that are just for one small group and even avoid seeing popular ones, and finally become art film fans. A film promoter, Plum, observes, "the key marketing strategy for alternative films is to catch the target audience' desires of differing from others, which is how art film festivals are promoted."

The leading actress, in Woody Allen's film, "*The Purple Rose of Cairo*," leads an unhappy life every day. Her boss always scolds her, and what's worse, she has an awful husband who doesn't understand her and hate going to the movies. All she can do every day after work is go to the movies alone, seeing the same movie over and over again. She sees it so many times that the leading actor of the movie remembers her. Suddenly, the fictional figure in the movie look at her, the real one of the audiences, talking to her. Moreover, he leaves the fictional space--behind the screen, comes into the real world for her and takes her out of the theater. He falls in love with her and refuses to return to the fictional world, the movie; he is no longer willing to live following the scenario. However, the movie without the leading actor then fail to go along; not knowing what to do, the other actors and actresses start to quarrel. This film, "*The Purple Rose of Cairo*," breaks successfully the frontier of real world and imaginary one, and frontier of theater and films. Two sorts of spaces are juxtaposed and easily to cross each other as what Edward Soja calls a "Thirdspace."<sup>6</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Being Secret

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<sup>6</sup> I will discuss art films fans' film space topics in part one of chapter three.

People may wear or carry popular commodities with them, which catch other's eyes with ease. They may even show off their rare objects to their peer friends and get a sense of achievement, or share what they collect with friends. Nevertheless, film objects collected by art film fans, such as film stubs, DVDs, posters, books or programs, are merely cherished secretly at their houses. They do not take them out and mention them to others, most of which is even unfamiliar to other people, such as works of some unknown directors and some unknown movies to them. Unlike popular commodities, art film fans cannot manifest their lifestyle with them. Valley observed,

I don't think that I can manifest my lifestyle by collecting these objects. For I put them all at home and no one knows. How can I show them off? Even though I show to others some objects of my favorite director, Hall Hartley, such as his scenarios and DVDs that cannot be found throughout Taipei but are bought in a foreign web site with great efforts, people do not know him at all but consider me weird instead. I have no chance to show many of such objects. On the contrary, if I use a bottle of "the Lord of Ring," which many people have, they know what it is.

Kai-Jong has similar feelings as Valley: "even I talk about and show those collections, people never have any reaction, for they do not know those directors at all and they never heard about those film titles. When I show or talk about those directors, we just feel embarrassed with each other." Yet if art film fans meet those with the same interests, that will be different. It is for sure that they will immediately recognize their status of being art film fans as them, and understand the values and meanings of these collections.

Lazycat never regards these collections as commodities, but consider these film objects "valuable treasures with significant meanings for films and for him." Most film fans search for these collections with great efforts, which have special meanings and values, and are even rare or limited version. Art film fans, therefore, are unwilling to share their collections with others or lend them out for fear that these treasures would be damaged and even disappear.

These collections are secretly kept at home, offering pleasure only for film fans themselves. For instance, while I called a friend of mine to ask for a research interview, he immediately insists that all his film collections be his treasures and never be lent to anyone.

Baudrillard argues that the uniqueness of collections derives from being possessed by “me;” namely, collectors get to realize from collectors that they themselves are an absolute and unique being (1997: 101). There is a close relationship between collecting and self-identity. Every art film fan expect himself /herself to be a special and unique person. Such expectation also reflects in his/her collecting: wishing to collect rare and unique collectors. Consequently, “what we collect is always ourselves” (Baudrillard, 1997: 101)

Most art film fans are dipped in films alone. Such craziness leads to their preferences of collecting objects of their favorite films secretly. With these collectors, they may continue being dipped in films and see movies as many times as they wish. It is no wonder that they are called “excessive film audience.”

Being different from general public’s reactions to movies, art film fans’ request for perfect film specifications and abilities to discover specification problems derived from their forming process, habitus and taste, which are formed in assorted fields. The next part will be on art film fans’ formation field.

### III. Fields for Habitus Formation

Art film fans are not born art film fans by nature, but are gradually formed through different fields, such as leaning fields, watching fields, and virtual fields, most of which combine several functions. Film clubs and Sun Movie, for example, are simultaneously watching fields and leaning fields, which cannot be divided clearly. Every art film fan might have different formation fields, yet they get to see alternative films and learn how to analyze films deeply in many fields. Subsequently, they find that many film discourses define these

fields and films roughly as art films. Eventually, they position themselves as art film fans.

### 3.1 On-Campus Film Courses and Clubs

Secret skills of dream interpretation are required techniques for those who wish to understand art films and become art film fans. Abstract dreamlands requires psychoanalyst to interpret in order to make dreamers realize their symbolic meanings. Not every audience is capable of understanding dreamlands and art films filled with abstract signs; they require interpreting and analyzing by dream interpreters or film critics with deciphering abilities to reveal their semiotic meanings. Not every audience possesses such secret skills. Mostly art film fans loving to dream and interpret dreams possess such kinds of skills. Nevertheless, secret skills of dream interpretation are not gifted, but acquired by learning.

As Bourdieu declares, “the propensity and capacity to accumulate ‘gratuitous’ knowledge, such as the names [and stylistic traits] of film directors, are more closely and exclusively linked to educational capital than is mere cinema-going” (Bourdieu, 1984: 26). Art film fans are different from general audience. Besides seeing films, the former deeply analyzes texts and other respects of film research, and they become familiar with film directors and stylistic traits, which is related to educational capital; the latter simply see movies. Schools, courses, film clubs, film books, film institutions, etc. are important fields for art film fans to acquire such abilities.

Many art film fans majored in mass communication, arts, fine arts, foreign literature, films, and so forth; they get in touch with non-mainstream films in the learning fields, in the school courses, such as “Film Theory,” “Media Aesthetics,” “Analysis of Film styles,” “Film and Literature,” and so on. The majority of the interviewees took some film-related courses and had access to alternative movies. Jessie, with a master’s degree in art, has her own aesthetic taste and prefers films with special styles and deep implication. Panpan, who is fond of reading, has the chance to access film festivals in a study group. Subsequently, she took

film courses in graduate school, which makes her prefer alternative films. She says,

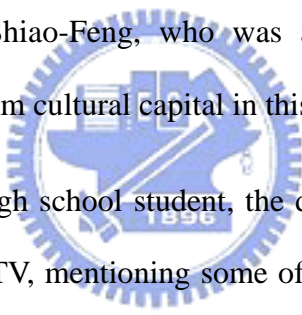
Some time ago, a study group member who loved art films invited me to go to the Golden Horse Film Festival with her. That was the first time that I got contact with alternative films....Later I took “Cultural studies” courses and learned film theories, which inspired my interest in art films and stimulated me to learn more about films. After I went to Taipei to be a schoolteacher, I found there are much more chances to get in touch with art films and film festivals in Taipei. If possible, therefore, I go to see all the alternative films in film festivals or in movie theaters. I always go alone, for it is difficult to find someone who loves going to the movies so much as me. On weekends, I can go to see many films, from morning till night; it is really exciting.

In order to do research about her film interest, Estella, who majored in Sociology, positively took film courses. She learned some film theories and film languages in a foreign department and also in off-campus film institutes, such as in Chinese Taipei Film Archive and in Eslite Bookstore. Now, she works as a film critic.

With academic acquisition, Estella got to write film critiques as a professional. David Bordwell declares that criticism depends on recognition skills, requires imagination, tastes and problem resolving capabilities accepted by specific mechanism, which means criticism terms and techniques accepted by film organizations and film academic institutions; namely, the convention and terms, shared and understood in Jenkins’ interpretive community (Bordwell 18; Jenkins 210). The film terms and academic languages utilized by film scholars appear very common in this interpretive community. Nevertheless, they are considerably unintelligible for the outsiders. By learning and practicing in film fields of all kinds, art film fans join in this special interpretive community and become familiar with these film terms and conventions, which certainly require accumulation of cultural capital. Accordingly, criticism techniques and tastes are much related to cultural capital.



Besides film courses, the majority of art film fans start with film clubs, which is an important access to alternative movies. Most film clubs have a well-organized film course syllabus and have arranged some discussion topics. Moreover, they ask famous film critics as their club counselors. For example, Wen Tien-hsiang (聞天祥) serves as a counselor in many film clubs, such as in Fu Jen Catholic University. In addition to film courses and speeches, alternative films are introduced and deeply discussed in film clubs, which are all good accesses to film learning. Furthermore, plenty of alternative film videotapes and books are collected, offering club members to use for free, by which club members are able to learn how to see movies and to be inspired. After seeing a quantity of movies and reading a lot of film critiques, they get to accumulate film cultural capital. Thus, they are gradually cultivated and have their own preference, taste, opinions towards films, and ways of comprehending movies. Take the example of Shiao-Feng, who was a film club member in Tamkang University, having accumulated film cultural capital in this field. He says,

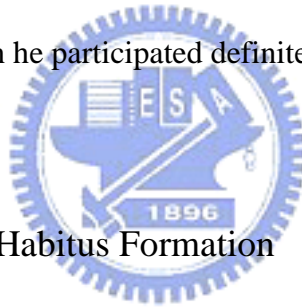


While I was a senior high school student, the death of director Federico Fellini is reported repeatedly on TV, mentioning some of his movies. I thought that he must be very great, but I never heard of those films. I wanted to see them, but found none in video stores. Then, I lived in the middle and south of Taiwan, where there were hardly any film festivals and where I couldn't see his films....Until I went to the university, I found a film club and took a look at their movie lists, where there were a great many alternative films, including Fellini's movies. That's why I joined the film club. I saw a lot of alternative movies and went to many film festivals with the club. Shortly afterwards, I took charge of our club property, with the video player, all the videotapes and books placed in my room. Thus, I saw movies now and then; if members wanted to see, I accompanied them to see again.

Tamsui is so far away [from Taipei City] that we cannot find a club counselor. Wen Tien-hsiang just came to our clubs several times and then quitted. Therefore, we

asked a professor in our university to serve as our nominal counselor to make our club keep going. Yet we leaders had to do all the guiding and analyzing work, take charge of all the speeches and lead the discussion, on films, directors, and related topics. In this way, we made plenty of oral reports on films in the film club, as oral presentations; we must see movies repeatedly, search for much information, read many books and discuss with other leaders. Thus, all of us learned a lot.

In a film club, besides seeing movies, members can also get in touch with film information of all sorts, such as film festivals. For instance, it was from friends in the club that Kai-Jong learned information about film festivals, and then attends film festivals habitually and has seen plenty of alternative cinema. A-Kai (阿凱) loved movies and after taking part in a film club, he got to know many alternative films. Film festivals are occasionally held in Tainan, which he participated definitely.




### 3.2 Off-Campus Fields for Habitus Formation

Film courses and film clubs are important fields for fans to learn films; films themselves are also essential learning texts. Those who studied film abroad such as Ying Wan (汪瑩) declared that the main method of learning movies is to see movies (Jen Huang 黃仁, 1985: 99). Professor Dante, teaching films in Shi-Shin University, also said, “I cannot teach you how to see movies. As a matter of fact, you keep it a habit of seeing two movies every day. That is the best way of learning films. Film texts are the best teachers.” Even though one never takes film courses but often sees movies, films themselves may help him or her cultivate aesthetic appreciation. As time passes by, one can have his or her own aesthetic taste and opinions, and accumulate film cultural capital and deciphering abilities. Those who have taken film courses may also sharpen their observation and upgrade their decoding capacities after seeing a good many movies. All these abilities are acquired, not gifted by nature; they are not born to have

artistic taste and aesthetic appreciation.

According to Ying Wan and Professor Dante, the most longstanding film festival, Golden House Film Festival, might have cultivated a group of art film fans after such a long time. They might never take film courses and they might not be film professionals. They must have learned a lot from the long-term film festival attending and cinema going. These art film fans of all kinds also become the loyal audience of all the other sorts of film festivals.

Bourdieu argues that knowledge and taste tend to construct a connection with obvious characteristics distinctively related to educational level (1997: 266). Momo says, “I cannot talk to a stockbroker for an afternoon, for we don’t have topics in common. Friends must be able to talk to me about my interests, films, literature, and art, etc. I cannot stand shallow talks.” Duck is also a typical example, loving literature, fine art, and comics in his youth, and he is crazy about films. He says,



I started getting in touch with art films in senior high school when I edited for school magazine. By *New Wave*, *Wen-Shin Magazine*, *Jen-Jian Magazine*, and Chu Tien-Wen’s novels, I knew that some people were making films, special films, which I looked forward to seeing and which seemed close to me. I was in department of library department in Shi-Shin University, in which I had no interest....I transformed into film department in 1991. I found films really interesting gradually. They have something to do with all my past interests. The posters hung in my room are those of new cinema.....These films were being made and played. I was fond of painting, reading comic books, but all of which were forbidden to do by my parents. Subsequently, I found animation also had something to do with them. Many things forbidden in my youth have something to do with films. I could do all of my interests in films. Films are really great and contain literature, painting and comics that I have loved since my youth.

Accordingly, there is a relationship among those who love literature, painting, art or classical music. People with film appreciation mostly took courses of art, literature and film, etc. They acquired abilities to appreciate art films by learning. Those without cultural capital seldom see art films, not to mention criticizing abilities. Education has great influence on film appreciation. “According to several studies of art film patrons, they do tend to be highly educated,” as Bruce. A. Austin discovers (82). The French statistical data also show that 70% of art film or experimental film audiences have bachelor’s degrees or higher (Yi-Ping Peng 彭怡平 127). There is a great relationship among art films, education and cultural capital.

Duck, majoring in film from university to graduate school, sees no films but art films. He declares that whatever films I see are alternative films. He adds,

I am not curious about mainstream stuff, as everyone can have reasons not to eat some things. I prefer something expressing emotions and I am affected by it. I don’t have great motivation to read a story in a film to keep me finishing seeing this film. Mainstream movies tell stories, while art films express emotions. Alternative films are resources from which I receive different messages and learn how to express.

Loving art films or Hollywood movies is actually a matter of preference and style, formed in the process of internalized thoughts and tastes and of externalized actions and activities, namely one’s habitus (Hsuan-Yang Kao 432).

“Sun Movie,” an important venue, was once many art film fans’ favorite channel, by which they were able to see a lot of alternative films. “Sun Movie plays an important role in the art film history in Taiwan,” says Plum with praise. It is one of the few channels that mostly played and introduced alternative films with theme film festivals on TV, such as queer films, feminism films, etc. It enabled audiences to see films with the same themes systematically. Sun Movie also planed a series of films focused on some directors, which enabled film fans to see several works of the same directors and thus became more familiar

with the style of those directors. Besides, the channel also organized “film fan club” episodes, in which famous film critics were invited to interpret and analyze movies. Consequently, Sun Movie became then a remarkably important field for art film fans to view movies at home and study movies on their own. Unfortunately, working for no more than five years, Sun Movie ceased operation on October 1, 2001, owing to limited audiences and deficient commercial profits, which could not support the channel.

Nowadays, upon mentioning Sun Movie, art film fans yearn for it and think it a pity that this channel does not work any longer. For the other foreign movie channels play almost exclusively Hollywood movies while European films or other art films are scarcely played. In spite of many movie channels in Taiwan, there is little difference among them. Videoland Movie Channel, starting on January 1, 2004, played particularly foreign films and series awarded prizes, and European films in addition to Hollywood movies. It will continue to buy and play festival films with good words of mouth, including European and Asian movies. Whether it can become art film fans’ favorite channel as Sun Movie, is worth observing.

Film books and magazines are also important media for art film fans. Besides, visual centers of the university library have plentiful film DVDs and videotapes; they are important and gratuitous viewing fields for art film fans as well. For example, Chang Ming-Hsiang (張銘祥) never joins any film club. He just sees films and reads film books by himself. He started to see non-mainstream film in a library. He says,

When I was a junior, I saw Truffaut’s “Les Quatre Cents Coups” in our university library. I identified myself to the little boy and felt how he felt. The filmmaking techniques and mis-en-scenes are so special that I couldn’t help but finding some books to study them. Subsequently, I saw more and more films and film books such as Yuan-Liou Film Series books, and then I went to film festivals very often.

Such film studying and viewing fields as film clubs, film books, film festivals, are often

related to one another and expand to one another, which produce art film fans continually. In addition, Chinese Taipei Film Archive, Eslite Forum and Film Arts Institute, hold film courses occasionally. These non-mainstream film institutes are also art film fans' significant studying and viewing fields. Duck once did a part time job in Chinese Taipei Film Archive just in order to see all the films there for free. Such kinds of film studying fields always appeal to a good many art film fans.

When it comes to how art film fans are cultivated, the most scale of viewing fields is movie theaters and film festivals of all sorts. Even though some art film fans have graduated and there are no more school film courses, film clubs and Sun Movie, and probably they do not have leisure time to read film books, movie theaters have always been their essential viewing fields and they will never be absent from film festivals, the studying and viewing fields. I will discuss more cinemas and film festivals in Chapter three (3.2 and 3.3). They both are indispensable fields for all art film fans, students or employees.

Speeches, delivered by noted film scholars or film professionals, are usually held focusing on some subjects toward the film festivals during festivals. Besides, film selecting introduction speeches usually given by a famous critic and film festival organizer Wen Tien-hsiang, are very popular before festivals. This is a necessary activity for many art film fans. Most film fans have ever attended his speeches. Jonathan says,

Wen Tien-hsiang is really my idol. No matter giving lectures or writing books, he also analyzes film texts clearly and profoundly in simple words, unlike theses in recondite terms....I used to attend his film selecting introduction speeches, yet after so many times of his speeches, I can judge and select films on my own. I don't need any more to select films according to his introduction.

Wen Tien-hsiang is an active cultural agent promoting films. His film critique books and film selecting introduction speeches, accordingly, are also important studying fields.

Kai-Jong also thinks highly of Wen Tien-hsiang. She states,

He leads a great many film fans into the film world, especially in our film club in Fu-Jen Catholic University. In the annual beginning of semester, we have freshman film festivals. He gives lectures and introduces films passionately to leads freshman into the film world. I really think he plays a significant role in us art film fans. His film selecting introduction speeches before film festivals can affect many people to view some certain movies. After the speeches, people always feel it necessary to see every film he has introduced. If they miss the films, they will regret for it.

Another film worker and film critic, Duck, has a similar passion as Wen Tien-hsiang; he says, “if I really love some films, I will try my best to promote it and ask everyone to see it so that the distributor will buy its copyright because of its popularity. In this way, this film can be seen in Taiwan after film festivals. Otherwise, most films cannot be seen any longer after film festivals.” It is evident that film critics, the opinion leaders, have a great influence on film audiences. Because of such cultural agents, film critics in books, speeches or courses, art film fans have cultivated in a fixed mode, with similar habitus and even with particular taste.

### 3.3 Internet and Other Fields

Art film fans also often go onto the virtual space, Internet, whose effects should not be neglected. Especially those young film fans go onto assorted film discussion stations and web sites. They read film critiques written by real film fans in a virtual space. Some discuss films with others while others just read the articles. Some even set up their own film news station, such as Kai-Jong and Jonathan, who are owners of film stations on Internet. They write film notes and critiques and share them with other fans through Internet.

There are still some art film fans which organize a film family in Yahoo, hailing those who love alternative movies. For instance, Lazycat serves as a vice-leader of a Yahoo film family, “Film Preview Festival Internet Committee.” He remarks that this is a film family

focusing on promoting festival films. The leader, a man of ability with many ideals for films, wrote abundant latest film information expecting that most family members understand art films more. With the leader's endeavor, it has become well organized with three branches, Internet Committee, Judge Committee and Judge Evaluation Organization, two electronic newspapers and one film station. In addition, our leader wrote to members and held activities regularly. The leader and the vice-leader, Lazycat, who hasn't found a job and still depends on his parents, even held film festivals with their own money. They made a film list, rented a playing place, printed posters and leaflets, got the film DVDs and thus held a film festival. Their passion and courage are really touching.

They both are very passionate and eager to keep working the film family and have done a lot for the family. Nevertheless, it is paradoxical that "many members felt scared and left the film family, for they thought only those who wrote film critiques well and understood art films very much could join and stay in the film family." As a matter of fact, those web sites emphasizing art films and elite culture intend for a small group of elite culture lovers. It is originally an organization belonging to a small group, sharing common interests there. The film family, hence, turned out to have a bad subsequent condition. Lazycat explains,

We kept suffering much loss from holding film festivals. I don't have income myself and the leader was also frightened by the reality. He then went to college; busy student life stopped him from continuing managing the film family. What's more, the participants were always the same ones who have become our good friends; we failed to reach our original target of promoting film festivals. Therefore, this film family now almost stops working and stays deserted.

The lack of centripetal force between film family and its members is an inevitable disadvantage in the Internet field, which makes virtual family hard to manage. With numerous difficulties, the leader gave up managing the film family in virtual space in the long run and took part in another film organization with real socials, film clubs in his



university, where members can truly interact, share and keep in touch with one another, which is different from in virtual Internet space.

Moorhouse observes “the participants in the enthusiasm are actors in a process of change and that individuals can move from one sector to another over time” (Abercrombie and Longhurst 133). Having managed Film Preview Festival Internet Committee for a period of time, under economic, academic and time pressure, the leader transformed from an enthusiastic amateur into an interested public and he also switched his activity field from virtual space into a real place, a university film club. This film family came to an end hereafter. Lazycat also invests his passion in another Yahoo film family, his ideal community, “Self Filmmaking CASE,” focusing on making independent documentary films as a small workshop. In Moorhouse’s terms, most of its members are amateurs and a few professionals. Even one member’s work was accepted to Peking Independent Film Festival. They have twenty members or so and each one pays 300 NT dollars to make films together; members with jobs supplement the rest budget. Everyone has his or her duty and meets weekly; the discussion records are uploaded on their family web site. “The filmmaking environment in Taiwan is awful, yet members still have great passion for filmmaking. Each of us expects to tell a story by films. If we can make it, we will apply for the domestic film festivals hoping that other people may see our works,” says Lazycat. These amateurs may probably become film professionals some day. Graduating from university in 2001, Lazycat has not intended to work and depends on his parents economically. His everyday life is all about movies. All he does every day is view movies either in movie theaters or at home, get on Internet film family or other film discussion stations, and read film critiques or film related information. Besides, he invests his time in this Self Filmmaking CASE as well. He is really a full-time amateur.

Viewing movies and studying movies require investment of time and money. There are plentiful gratuitous resources in university, and students have more and flexible time and more chances to see movies, such as film clubs, film courses, visual center in the university

library, and so forth. Once they graduate and leave the campus, they fail to study and view movies to their hearts' content as before due to limited time, busy work and new family. Moreover, they miss the access to those gratuitous film resources. All they can do is spare time and pay money in some film institution to study films and view films, such as Chinese Taipei Film Archive, Eslite Forum, Film Arts Institute, movie theaters, film festivals, etc. Compared with students, art film fans with jobs have much less resources. In other respect, the film discussion stations on Internet are a place for art film fans to do homework and practice what they have learned in viewing and studying fields.

To see assorted movies in great quantity by themselves, students may go to the university and visual centers, while people with jobs in Taipei may probably go to Chinese Taipei Film Archive, with many films there. However, the yearly membership fee is really high, 1800 NT dollars. The Ministry of Culture of French Government subsidizes Bibliothèque du Film (Film Library) 3000 francs (equal to 150 million NT dollars) each year. The Film Library annual membership fee only charges about 1000 NT dollars while for students only 500 NT dollars (Edmond Wong 黃建業, 1997: 68-9). Compared with Chinese Taipei Film Archive, Bibliothèque du Film has far more film resources and its membership fee is also much cheaper, which may encourage more people to come to film studies and viewing field. Although Chinese Taipei Film Archive is a film institute open to everyone, most of its users and participants are those with cultural capital, who continue accumulating more cultural capital there. As Bourdieu declares, it is difficult to break the chain of accumulating effect of cultural capital absorbing more cultural capital (1997: 267). It requires much endeavor of national film-cultural policies to alter the film viewing habitus of general public and encourage them to view other films different from Hollywood ones.

The Cultural Polity proposed by the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government mentions a strategy to revive film industry, one procedure of which refers to holding Taipei Film Festival, by which to encourage the public to view art films by means of

importing and introducing international good art films<sup>7</sup>. The first Taipei Film Festival started in 1999 and it is held annually. Nevertheless, Taipei Film Festivals focus on art films, only serving for a small group of intellectuals and cultural elites, for most participants are cultural elites originally interested in alternative films and those having deciphering abilities to art films. General public hardly attend film festivals for the lack of art film interest and decoding competence. Consequently, it is hard to achieve their initial goal to encourage general public without film cultural capital to view non-commercial movies.

The introduction of The Cultural Polity proposed by the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government says clearly that “cultural is a kind of combination containing *cultivation, taste, wisdom, spirit and creativity*” (my emphasis). Without introduction, general public seldom get in contact with film festival information and resources and hardly have art film deciphering abilities. A ticket employee in Spring Cinema discovers that the mainstream movie ticket buyers are of all ages while art film ticket buyers “are obviously elder filled with *wisdom* in their eyes (emphasis added).” No matter the “wisdom in their eyes” means that ticket buyers are wiser or that ticket employee’s imagination towards art film audiences, it implies the relationship among art films, ages and cultural capital. Miss Huang, a ticket employee in Majesty Theater, also finds that “audience in the art house seems to be *more cultivated*, for the garbage left there is far less than the other one” (my emphasis). It is also an interesting remark. The “wisdom” and being “*more cultivated*” seem to echo with the definition of “culture” in the above-mentioned Cultural Polity proposal. Its film cultural policy serves only for cultural elites, which does not reach their policy target. These film festivals supporters are limited in art film fans familiar with manifold secret accesses and those with dream interpretation secret skills throughout assorted studying and viewing fields.

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<sup>7</sup> The reference is in the web site of Cultural polity proposed by the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government.

## IV. Self-Positioning and Fandom Spectrum

### 4.1 Art Film Fans' Self-Positioning

Art film fans understand the common film academic language, attend the same film festivals, saw the same movies and are familiar with the same directors. Although they do not know one another, through common interests, topics, experiences and identification, they form in film discussion station an alternative social community-- art film fans.

After being shaped in assorted fields, the art film audiences staying in the fields position themselves as art film fans, for they identify with these fields and discourses. For example, Momo says, "I heard about a group of people who dislike Hollywood movies. I read some film articles and thus know some films are called art films. I found I am one of them who only love seeing this kind of films and knew that I am a so-called art film fan, alternative film audience just like them." At that time, Momo positioned herself as an art film fan.

The fandom of this group of art film fans keep secret and low-keyed; they emphasize having their own unique opinions and feelings. They are all considered people loving "queer films" by their acquaintances and they all like such impression and description. It means they have different taste from that of general public, which may satisfy their desire for distinction. They categorize themselves simultaneously as cultural elites loving and understanding alternative films instead of general public loving mainstream movies.

On one hand, most art film fans feel lonely, sighing about few friends with whom to go to the movies, film festivals and speeches; they can't but go alone. On the other hand, art film fans prefer going to the movies alone. Kai-Jong argues "only those who can go to the movies alone are real art film fans." They may meet other film fans with similar interest and habitus in their beloved occasions and know they are not alone, for most fans come alone. In this way, they get a sense of belongingness to this small community and self-position as art film fans.

Jenkins mentions in his fourth fandom operation model, "[f]andom" constitutes and

alternative social community;” fans “may never---or only seldom---meet face to face ” but “share a common sense of identity and interests. What fandom offers is ... a community of consumers defined through their common relationship with shared texts” (213). Art film fans are such kind of community. They have common passion and interest in alternative films and attend the same film festivals, see the required festival films recommended by film critics, and come across to meet in the film festival speeches. They belong to the same consuming community, a loose art-film-fan social community; they meet and recognize one another merely in specific occasion and time.

John Fiske proposes three main characteristics of fandom: Discrimination and Distinction, Productivity and Participation and Capital Accumulation (34-42). Art film fans have these three traits. The first one will be discussed in the next chapter. They write film critiques, get involved in filmmaking and attend film festivals positively, which belong to the second characteristic; they accumulate cultural capital in manifold studying and viewing fields and become art film fans, which are the third trait.

Accordingly, art film fans are also fans, as fans in other fields having assorted crazy behaviors. “Fans adopt a distinctive mode of reception,” as Jenkins observes (209). Art film fans are almost dipped in films. What is different from other fans is that they dislike socials and tend to be dipped in films alone. They regard film viewing as a personal activity; they treasure their collections secretly unwilling to share with others. Besides, they enjoy their interests in a low-keyed way, with a recessive lifestyle. For they are merely a small group; it is difficult to outstandingly exclaim about their lifestyle and interest and to get resonance.

In Bourdieu’s opinion, artistic taste and competence is not gifted but acquired in some socio-cultural condition and formed by systematical or non-systematical education (1997: 262). Art film fans are not born to have film appreciation, but acquired and cultivated in assorted film studying and viewing fields, where they accumulate cultural capital gradually and become art film fans eventually.

In addition to the art-film-fan cultivation fields described in this chapter, there is still another more important field---film, which requires exploring from the spatial angle. The next chapter will discuss the “film” field in the angle of space.

#### 4.2 The Fandom Spectrum of Art Film Fans

There are varieties of art film fans’ background, lifestyle, and habitus, which are heterogeneous. The extent of their investment and attachment in films varies from one fan to another. For one thing, H. F. Moorhouse develops an enthusiasm model according to his research of hot-rod enthusiasts, with which I would like to categorize art film fans to illustrate the differences of their fandom spectrum. It is as follows.

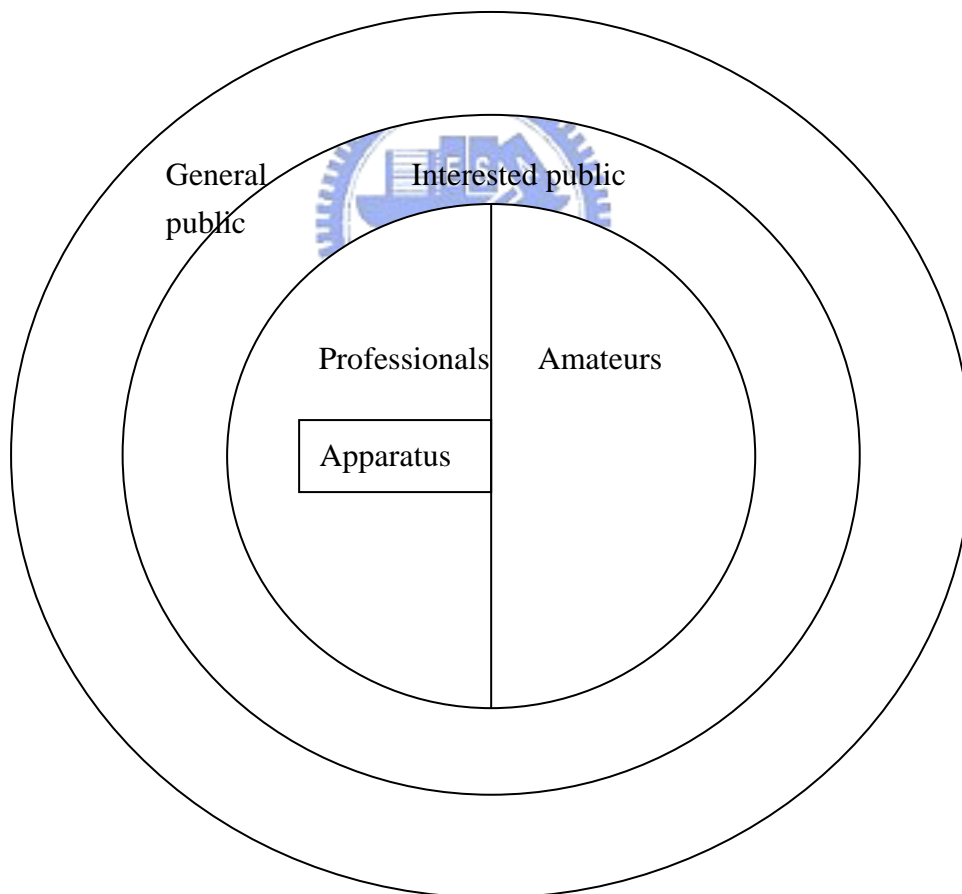


Figure 2.4 Representation of Moorhouse’s (1991) model of the American hot-rod enthusiasm (Abercrombie and Longhurst 133)

Moorhouse suggests that an enthusiasm will be composed of several layers around a core. The core consists of two main groups: professionals and amateurs. Around the core of

the enthusiasm is the “interested public,” outside which is the “general public.” I discuss them respectively as follows.

(1) Professionals:

Professionals lie in the deepest area in the fandom spectrum. Film professionals earn a living from the enthusiasm, including all kinds of film enthusiasts, such as directors, producers, film critics, administrators, officials, promoters, distributors, and so forth, namely, “the paid practitioners of the core activities” and “the ‘experts’ of the enthusiasm of all kinds” (Abercrombie and Longhurst 132). Films are not only their interests but also their work; compared with other film fans, they get involved in films the most. Take Duck for example; he is neither willing to work at a newspaper office nor to get a regular job, for thus he cannot go to the movies frequently and to attend film festivals. Because of his enthusiasm about films, he chose to do some jobs related to films without caring about salary. He may even write film critiques without being paid, while Valley does not. She said, “I have to write film reports and film scenarios very often; I never think of writing for BBS or those without pay.” Thoughts differ with different art film fans and different film professionals. In addition, there is a group inside the core, “Apparatus,” intellectuals in the group, “owning or controlling the means of communication about the enthusiasm” (132).

(2) Amateurs

The same as professionals, amateurs lie in the deepest part of the fandom spectrum. They are also very enthusiastic about films, but their jobs are not related to films. In the documentary film, “*Cinemia*,” Bill, Jack, Roberta, Eric, etc. are crazy alternative film fans in New York, including philosophers, retired old men, who are not film professionals but pretty much obsessive film fans. In the movie, we may see some fan still loves to go to the movies even though he has to live on the pension. Their lives are in a mess; they do not care about the human relationship but whether they have seen a good movie.

Where there are film festivals and art films, where they go as nomads. They move and hurry over with film festivals. Even if they have to work, they always manage to spare time to see as many movies as possible. For example, Panpan (潘潘) goes to the movies whenever she is free from work. Some film fans do not see movies without art films. If there are not art films, life becomes meaningless to them. For movies, they would not find a “nine to five job,” which stops them from arranging their time to see movies. Lazycat, who is determined to keep single for good, still depend on his parents economically. Even so, he still goes to the movies several times a week. He discusses films every day in the Internet film communities and frequently attends activities held by the film communities. Furthermore, he even spent a lot of money holding film festivals, just to promote and introduce good movies to others.

### (3) Interested public

Around the core is the interested public, to which most film fans who work belong, located in the middle of the fandom spectrum. Being students, they were crazy film fans. Yet after graduation and starting to work, work is their first considering priority. They will see movies only if there is still free time after work. Momo, for instance, positively saw movies while she was a student. However, she thinks more highly of work than films. She would go to the movies only when having leisure time. Yao-Bo led a frugal life to see as many movies as possible before graduation. However, he cannot but compromise with the reality after working. He does not invest so much as he did before due to his limited time and busy jobs. In addition, interested public also include novices, consumers of symbols, dabblers, the mass media looking for stories, and so on (Abercrombie and Longhurst 133).

### (4) General public

General public, lying in the lightest area of the fandom spectrum, include those who do not refuse to see alternative movies occasionally, which are merely one of their choices from other film genres. Art films are by no means indispensable for them. Without seeing art films,



they can still live their normal lives without feeling lost. They feel satisfied to see one alternative film or two during film festivals.

Such categories are not fixed but flowing. Moorhouse suggests, “it is important to realize that participants in the enthusiasm are actors in a process of change and that individuals can move from one sector to another over time,” such as from general public into interested public, from amateurs into professionals, even into interested public (133).

For another thing, Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst suggest an idea of “audience continuum,” which might illustrate the nuance of art film fans and is as follows.

Consumer --- Fan --- Cultist --- Enthusiast --- Petty Producer

Figure 2.5 The audience continuum (Abercrombie and Longhurst 141)

According to the audience continuum in figure 2.5, we might apply it to film audience and realize that film fans are initially merely consumers, and then become fans, enthusiasts and even petty producers eventually. As for their beloved objects, in the beginning, art film fans like some directors, films, and actors for some time, they become to prefer specific ones, and prefer specific genres and topics. Then, they become cultists. Subsequently, they positively attend film activities of all kinds such as film festivals and become enthusiasts. Consumers, in Moorhouse’s terms, are general public; petty producers are those who become professionals from enthusiasts (Abercrombie and Longhurst 140-41).

Based on Moorhouse’s model, art film fans are divided into different types according to their investing extents; based on Abercrombie and Longhurst’s idea of audience continuum, art film fans behave differently because of lying in different stages of audience continuum. There are nuances of fandom extents among art film fans, which is called fandom spectrum in my research and which shows that art film fans are not homogeneous at all.

## Chapter III Art Film Fans' Spatial Fields of Performance

Art film fans' habitus mentioned in the previous chapter has great influence on their spatial feelings and preferences. They long for heterotopias in the films; cinema is a third space of simultaneously imaginary and real space. I will discuss the film field from the angle of space. There are three layers of art film fans' spatial playing fields: film texts themselves viewed by art film fans, the concrete space---movie theaters playing films, and the significant film cultural space, with many movie theaters and film activities held there --- Xi-Men-Ding.

### I. Spatial Connection of Art Film Fans

Movie theaters are important public space where urban citizens share their sorrowful and delightful sentiments and where they store their joyful and sweet living experiences. Since film industry started, movie theaters have become the space offering exotic imagination and remote fantasies (Ching-Chih Lee 李清志, 1994: 72).

#### 1.1 Longing for the Heterotopia in Films (Theaters)

Movie theaters are utopias to isolate and distinguish people themselves.  
(Ching-Chih Lee 1998, 85)

Everyday life with all the superior mod cons takes on the distance and remoteness and familiar strangeness of a dream. The display of luxury to be seen in so many films, most of them mediocre, takes on an almost fascinating character, and the spectator is uprooted from his everyday world by an everyday world *other* than his own. Escape into this illusory but present everyday world...explains the momentary success these films enjoy. (Henri Lefebvre, qtd. in Soja, 1996: 41, original emphasis)

The transient heterotopia<sup>8</sup> in movie theaters differs from quotidian time and space. Jonathan finds, “many people go to the movies partially in order to escape from the reality, from assorted unhappy situations in their real life and to enter another world even just for two hours or three.” Namely, they attempt to flee their own daily world transiently. Jonathan adds with sadness, “having gradually grown up, I get to know that kind of world and space is illusory and short-lasting. I am always forced to return to my own real world after movies end.” Yet Kai-Jong optimistically states, “it is still good even if two or three hours escape, for we can dream good dreams one after another. It is the short time of satisfaction that keeps us going to the movies continually.”

Art film fans yearn for heterotopias in films, which may help them escape from reality and which is an essential access for them to understand the world and acquire knowledge. “There is limitation in human life, in the places humans can go and in the ways of living they can experience. By means of art films and documentary films, we can easily understand people, their life, society and culture, history and viewpoints of all issues in different areas,” Momo thinks. Many art film fans endeavor to know the world and acquire wisdom by transient heterotopias in films, while some attempt to escape from their real unhappy life and by staying in a dark movie theater, in the heterotopias in films. There are still others who do with the two above-mentioned goals.

Some situations or time/space in the movies are difficult or even impossible for film fans to experience or imagine in their everyday world. Heterotopias in films, hence, appeal to film fans all the time. For example, Valley longs for historical movies, for the royal and noble life is her dreams. She always imagines herself to be one character in the films and to experience

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<sup>8</sup> The idea of “heterotopia” is proposed by Michel Foucault in his essay, “Of Other Space.” He declares in this article,

First there are the utopias. Utopias are sites with no real place.... these utopias are fundamentally unreal spaces..... Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias. I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias.

the aristocrats' lives, costumes, furniture and architecture, the entire historical atmosphere in that epoch.

“[T]he cinema is a very odd rectangular room, at the end of which, on a two-dimensional screen, one sees the projection of a three-dimensional space” (Foucault, 1986)<sup>9</sup>. A movie theater is also what Foucault calls “heterotopia,” which is “capable of juxtaposing in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible” (Foucault, 1986)<sup>10</sup>. It resembles a mirror. In the movie theaters, behind the two-dimensioned screen expands a colorful three-dimensioned space, which cannot actually coexist with the space where audiences are. The time within the three-dimensioned space, in the film, is also different from the time when audiences see the film. In the cinema, heterotopia does not only refer to space but also to time; both coexist simultaneously. Furthermore, the heterotopia in the cinema has an accurate and specific function. It helps audiences escape from everyday time and space and flee into the film world---a transient heterotopia offering audiences two or three hours' dreaming. Besides, film festivals as heterotopias are also temporary, about two weeks.

I like films describing stories about some countries, sites, and people in some eras or some historical periods. I love scenes in that kind of time and space. That kinds of films really attract me (Yao-Bo).

Art films are sources of my receiving different information (Duck).

Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public place. Either the entry is compulsory, ... or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have a certain

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<sup>9</sup> Reference from <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html> on 2005/4/8

<sup>10</sup> Reference from <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html> on 2005/4/8

permission and make certain gestures (Foucault, 1986)<sup>11</sup>.

Art houses and film festivals resemble heterotopias that art film fans enter easily while others are excluded from. To enter art houses for alternative cinema viewing, one is required to know film information and successfully buy tickets. In the case of special film festivals, one has to know the doorways to get into. Without the necessary ritual and news, one is unlikely to enter for movies. Before seeing films, one should also cultivate a knowledge of films for a long time to be able to decipher movies.

There are other heterotopias “that seem to be pure and simple openings, but that generally hide curious exclusions. Everyone can enter into the heterotopic sites, but in fact that is only an illusion” (Foucault, 1986)<sup>12</sup>. Art films are such kind of space. It is apparently open to all people, yet not everyone has the ability and access to the secret space and is able to understand movies of these sorts.

Valley states, “I have no money nor chance for going abroad. I have been fond of exploring different countries and cultures. Therefore, I love seeing art films to understand different countries and cultures, which I have been looking forward to.” Many art film fans know the world by means of films, most of whom long for the scenes in films, hoping to go to the countries represented the films in person. Valley has gone to her favorite film scenes in person. She says,

In my childhood, my parents took me to a film about a story of Irish army, with wooden flute music in the end, which touched me a lot. My parents told me that I teas rolled down my cheeks while seeing that film. Thereafter, I fall in love with Irish music. When I am grown up, I read Irish literature and see Irish films very often. After graduation from university, I worked for one year and saved some money. I went to Ireland alone. I went to a western cliff in Ireland of one film.

<sup>11</sup> Reference from <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html> on 2005/4/8

<sup>12</sup> Reference from <http://foucault.info/documents/heteroTopia/foucault.heteroTopia.en.html> on 2005/4/8

Standing on the cliff, in the scene of the film, I felt I must be an Irishwoman in my last lifetime. And that place must be my birthplace of my last life. I was just born there. I really desired to jump into the sea from the cliff at that time so that I could belong to Ireland forever and return to my birthplace of my last life.

In addition, after seeing several documentary films on Orchid Island, she also went to visit Orchid Island. She says,

After seeing several documentary films about Orchid Island, I went to Orchid Island to visit the characters in the films and to search for the memories of the films. ....I had some contact with documentary filmmakers and saw some documentary films forbidden to be released and screened in public. For example, “Sipulasan”<sup>13</sup> (希普拉珊) describes a taboo in Orchid Island about a girl Sipulasan. People of Orchid Island protested that this film disrespected them and stopped the filmmaker from releasing it. ... I felt much pity for the little girl, for she looked exactly like general girls. As a result, I wanted to look for the girl as well. Arriving there and asking everyone everywhere for searching for the girl, most people kept silent about her; some refused to say anything about her and some violently asked me not to touch this taboo.

I went there with my partner, going to break up with me, hoping to discover our lost love; however, as in most road movies, we broke up after our return from the trip. I wrote this story into a scenario, with which to apply for a film graduate school and I was admitted to.

Valley went to a cliff in Ireland, a scene of the film. She longed for the heterotopia and attempted to enter the real space of an imaginary story of the film. She visited tribes in Orchid Island, searching for the real people in the documentary films and hoping to

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<sup>13</sup> I translate it myself.

experience in person the reality of the film. After finishing the journey with her broken-up lover, she recorded this trip experience as a scenario. She was writing a real event into a story with an imaginary form, yet she let others mistake it for a mere imagined story. The fine relationship between real space and imaginary space is what Edward Soja calls “third space.”

## 1.2 The Third Space: between Imagination and Reality

The city exists as a series of doubles; it has official and hidden cultures, it is a real place and a site of imagination. Its elaborate network of streets, housing, public buildings, transport system, parks, and shops is paralleled by a complex of attitudes, habits, customs, expectancies, and hopes that reside in us as urban subjects. We discover that urban “reality” is not single but multiple, that inside the city there is always another city. (Iain Chambers, qtd. in Soja, 1996: 186)

Xi-Men-Ding has become a popular culture space for the young with the official urban program and commercial endeavor. Nevertheless, Xi-Men-Ding is by no means a homogeneous space exclusively for young culture, but juxtaposed by queer culture, the old culture, film culture, and so forth. It is actually a heterogeneous space.

Xi-Men-Ding is also juxtaposed by a real space and an imaginary space. First of all, art film fans go into a real concrete space, Xi-Men-Ding, and then another real concrete space, movies theaters. After the lights turn off, movies start to play in a dark but real space. Shortly afterwards, they enter an imagined space with colors different from previous real space. Although films are an imaginary space, there are real and concrete spaces in them. Except for animation, most scenes in the films are shot in real space. As a result, Valley was attracted by the real scenes of the imaginary space and went to a cliff in Ireland and tribes in Orchid Island, which are all real scenes in films, concrete spaces in imaginary space.

Soja describes the third-space as the place “where all spaces are” (Soja, 1996). Xi-Men-Ding, theaters and movies, are constructed as an interesting third space, a real space

inclusive of an imagined space, and an imaginary space containing a real space.

## II. Dreamlike Films: Film Texts and Film Festivals

Seeing movies resembles dreaming a dream, a sober dream, experiencing one kind of others' lives, situations and environment as a character inside. (Lazycat)

Art film fans love alternative movies, dream-like films. As dreamers and dream interpreters, art film fans dream a dream weaved by others and interpret the dreamlands. Such film texts especially art films are filled with codes of all sorts and require deciphering. This part is going to discuss the relationship between film texts and art films.

### 2.1 Film Meanings of Dreamers and Dream Interpreters

If dreamlands are entrances to multi-dimensional time and space and we flee from the material world into another time and space, seeing movies is the similar situation....At some time, a certain movie catches your attention intuitively; then, you spare two hours or three, go to the theater, buy a ticket, and get into a dark and bright time and space. With the plot, we come to forget psychologically where we come from, and we enter the situation of surprise, emotional rise and fall, joy and tears....Sometimes, we go to the movies out of depression, hoping to enter another time-space and forget the real world. (Ching-Jong Wang 王靜蓉 25-6)

During film festivals, I can dream intensively for two weeks, one dream after another dream; it is really exciting. (Kai-Jong)

Art film fans, loving such dreamlike movies, dreamers and dream interpreters, have special dream interpretation skill and know the secret access. Such secret doorways are only known to art film fans. It is mostly art film fans that can enter them, view, interpret and criticize the dreamlike films.

While seeing the movies, real dreamer weavers are concealed, making film audience



think that they are dreaming themselves, forgetting psychologically and temporarily the fact that films are actually stories made up by others, created by playwrights and directors. Only after art film fans see the movies, awake from dreams, leave the dreamlands and theaters do they realize that they are merely others' dreams and that they just see dreams which have been weaved by others. Shortly afterwards, dreamers become psychoanalysts who interpret the implication of others' dreamlands; namely, they become film critics, professional or amateur ones. For directors, especially auteur directors, present by filmmaking his/her thoughts, stories, emotions and observation that become sources of dreams. Sometimes, directors would protest that film critics interpret their works incorrectly and arbitrarily. Yet film critics debate that most directors have an "intentional fallacy." That is to say, film directors probably do not know what he exactly wants to express; some representations that they do not originally mean will show in their works spontaneously, and some social issues or cultural elements are always richly embedded in their production. Film critics, therefore, declare that film works are beyond directors. As dreamers, they are not conscious of their depressed emotions and thoughts, which require psychoanalysts' interpretations to understand. Likewise, patients will resist and deny what psychoanalysts analyze. Such type of mechanism exists in every person.

James Joyce comments in his *Ulysses*, "I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality."<sup>14</sup> This is an interesting remark, which is true not only for literates but also for art film directors. Audiences always make every endeavor to guess what are in film directors' mind; each audience has his/her own opinions and interpretation and they even quarrel about them. A set of cuts, mis-en sences, dialogues may be ignored by a film critic but emphasized by another one. All the material in film texts can be selected and imagined arbitrarily, which increases the possibilities, complication and the endless variety

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<sup>14</sup> Reference from <http://www.teach12.com/ttc/Assets/courseDescriptions/237.asp> on 2005/4/16

of a film (Bordwell 26-27). Thus, it helps the film play an academic part and be likely to become immortal.

While art film fans are seeing movies, they interpret films. According to Paul Ricoeur's definition of interpretation, it is a kind of thinking activities, explaining implicit meanings in explicit meanings, unpacking the multi-layered implied meanings of literal meanings (qtd. in Bordwell 25). Bordwell explains further, a piece of art or an article is considered a container that artists fills with meanings and where viewers pull them out one by one. They unpack works and bring implied meanings out by means of comprehension and interpretation. The comprehension and interpretation of a film is an activity focusing on viewers (25).

Accordingly, interpreting films is a common and important action after seeing movies. Jenkins' second mode of fandom operation proposes that "[f]andom constitutes a particular interpretative community....Fan reading practices and "fan interpretations need to be understood in institutional rather than personal terms" (210).

Being analyzed by dream interpreters, the implicit meanings of unintelligible dreams become comprehensible; most art films resemble such kind of dreams that require interpretation. One of my friends, Evient, points out, "art films always express ridiculous stuff in a self-complacent and self-opinionated way." Everything becomes possible in terms of art. The dreamers and film critics of art films always make their own meanings for their beloved movies respectively.

## 2.2 Dreamlands Required Deciphering: Alternative Films

If we say that Hollywood movies construct a fantastical world filled with entertainment and visual and audio effects, then, film festivals also construct "art film" space. Different from Hollywood movies' popular orientation, art films rather appeal to elites. Then, "films are no longer films; films are a semiotic symbol, a life world" (Shan Cho 卓珊 47).

Films are like dreamlands, full of abstract signs and symbols, which require

interpretation, deciphering and analyzing. According to Freud's opinions on dreams, the ordinary dream scenes bear extraordinary implications and need to be analyzed. Only trained psychoanalysts and those with dream interpretation can do it. Likewise, dreamlike films present in a metaphorical and circuitous manner, different from that of commercial movies. People can hardly comprehend art films without special competence.

There was a strict censorship system in early times, when films were frequently trimmed or forbidden to release. When directors touched some sensitive issues such as politics and gender, they tend to represent them in an artistic, metaphorical, abstract and circuitous manner. General public and the censor authorities read merely the apparent stories, while sensitive intellectuals read the implied ones. There were some preview rooms in Xi-Men-Ding, where intellectuals and elites gathered to view forbidden movies acquired secretly or abroad. Nowadays, people are able to view alternative or non-mainstream films far easier than ever before, for there are assorted film festivals.

There is no exact definition of "art films," the majority of which only appeal to a small group of audiences. There is no obvious boundary between art films and commercial movies. The distinction between the two is quite paradoxical. While being sold in market, films are categorized according to different consuming groups and target markets; the distinction is a kind of marketing strategies aiming at specific groups of audiences, which is called a niche market. Besides in film festivals, art films are often screened in some specific theaters or even in one single theater. For instance, the opening film in 2003 Golden Horse Film Festival, *Devdas*, is a resplendent commercial musical movie in India but becomes an art film in Taiwan. Maggie Chiao, a famous film critic and producer, also points out that movies of Tsui Hark and John Wu are mainstream commercial movies in Hong Kong, yet they are also wrapped into art films when being sold to Europe and America. The distinction between art films and commercial movies, therefore, is rather a market differentiation and a marketing strategy than a film category (Shan Cho 45-6).

Film marketing companies make a distinction between art films and commercial movies. Most people, including art film fans, accept gradually such ways of differentiating films.

In Taiwan, art films are simply a categorized item of commercial market mechanism. There is no precise definition in Taiwan, but in France, the origin of films and a country that endeavors to fight against Hollywood film industry and to protect its own film art and culture. The CNC (Centre National de la Cinématographie) proposed a cinema category rule on March 14, 1986; the following types are categorized into art films: (1) films of high quality but not popular with audiences (2) films with researching spirit and creativity (3) localized films unknown in France (4) rerun films of artistic or historical value, especially classical works (5) short films with renewing quality, subjects and ways of representation (6) temporary films appreciated by audiences and film critics or with great distribution to filmmaking (7) amateur-made films of special high quality. About 400 films are made every year in France, one hundred of which are categorized into art films (Virenque 83-84).

Based on such definition, most European films played in Taiwan are art films (Ti Wei 魏均 30). For European films are rich in localism and unknown in Taiwan, where American movies are prevailing. Many prize-winning films or domestic independent films played in art houses also belong to type one, films of high quality but not popular with audiences. Recently, films of type four are also seen as film festivals in Taiwan, such as Yasujiro Ozu Film Festival in Spot-the Taipei House and François Truffaut Film Festival in Spring Cinema, etc.

The art films under the niche marketing mechanism are usually non-mainstream films, aiming at alternative film fans. Most film fans get identified with such way of differentiation and continue to name their beloved films “art films,” popular with a small group of audiences. Yet most art film fans accept all kinds of films, mainstream and non-mainstream ones, for fear of missing any good films. They prefer to believe their own judgement instead of film distributors’ film classification. Only few film fans do not see films but art films.

### 2.3 Ritual Secret Accesses: Time-Space Experiences in Film Festivals

People require doorways to see art films. Nevertheless, not everyone knows the secret access. Non-art film fans complain about their difficulties in getting program brochures and buying film tickets. Upon hearing the news of Taipei Film Festivals, they go to Eslite Bookstore out of curiosity asking for the programs. However, all the brochures have been given away, and their target films tickets all sold out. They can only purchase other tickets still available. It is because they do not know well the ritual and secret passage of film festivals and therefore cannot find the doorway to enter. Film festivals adopt different ways of marketing and have different cinema going rituals from commercial films. Not knowing this, they go to the movies still at ordinary pace and in a usual manner, and they cannot find the accesses to the festivals. As a result, they suffer from the above-mentioned difficulties.

Attending film festivals such as the annual Golden Horse Film Festival and Taipei Film Festival is one of the essential rituals every year for art film fans. From the idea of “ritual,” Real, researching about people’s enthusiasm for Olympic Games, observes that the ritualistic power of Olympic Games lies in its abilities of centering global attention in a short time. The idea of rituals helps us to comprehend how people are related and integrated to each other in a particular time and space and to explain how a shared belief is created, represented and celebrated in public (qtd. in Sherry Jean 65).

The ritualistic power of the annual film festivals in Taiwan is similar to Olympic Games. Most film festivals center and take place in Taipei. During film festivals, all the art film fans from all parts of Taiwan gather with enthusiasm in theaters of film festivals. During the period, nothing matters but film festivals, for they are able to see many good films that cannot be seen at usual time. Jonathan stated that it is very general that students cut classes for film festivals, for there is nothing more important than attending film festivals. Many fans hurry for seeing several films within one day, even some feel anxious because of film festivals, such as Duck, who says,

I see at most five films a day during film festivals. It is okay to do so for one or two days. But what if every day? There are so many film festivals in a year, Golden Horse Film Festival, Taipei Film Festival, Documentary Film Festival, etc. If I live in this way all year round, I will have no time writing. Unless I don't need to worry about living expenses, I can't live a life this way. Most people need to work. It is mostly a problem of time arrangement. If I want to see so many movies, I can't go to work regularly. No stable work, no stable income and there will be problems in a couple of years. Alas, I am always anxious during film festivals. I still have to see movies, to write something, to work. The older I grow, the more anxious I feel.

During film festivals, art film fans feel anxious between the alternatives of work, studies or movies. Most of them choose movies. Feeling exhausted, they still keep seeing movies, seeing all the good movies they like and fearing missing any one. Kai-Jong says,

Film festivals usually last for two weeks. Most audiences hurry to see several movies each day. For the first week, everyone is energetic; for the second week, everyone is tired out but still comes for movies. I go to the film festivals every day, several movies each day. I am scared for the second week, for I feel exhausted after having seen movies for one week but still have many good movies to see. Even though I have to cut classes, I go for movies, but I really fear falling asleep in the theater. That is really horrible. Falling asleep in class is nothing serious, but falling asleep in the movie theaters is very terrible.

Most audiences have a common feeling as Panpan says, "it is easy to meet some people that look familiar but are met only during film festivals. Although we are not acquainted with each other, we know all of us are art film fans, adoring audiences." These familiar-looking pilgrims are film festival patrons, appearing every year for movies. As in previous chapter, the semi-secret loose community, art film fans, recognize each other in the occasion of film festivals after entering the secret doorways to film festivals.

Art film fans, which are experienced, positive in film festivals and know the secret passage, are aware of where to get the detailed film festival information, when to acquire programs, when and where to buy tickets. They know they should line up several hours before the tickets start to be sold and know how to arrange their viewing schedule to see most films. Valley, living in Shi-Lin, says,

Before the ticket-selling time at noon, I always go to Tamshui to line up for tickets. According to my past experiences, there are too many people lining up in all the selling places in Taipei. It is hard to get all my required tickets. There are fewer in Tamshui. However, while I arrived in Tamshui, there were already many people waiting in line there. They said they went to line up before seven in the morning.

Before the computer ticket-selling system started, art film fans usually waited in line the eve of the advance ticket sale day. The next day, they got the order number ticket for buying. At noon, they bought all their wanted tickets. Shiao-Mi and her friends figured out a strategy for buying advance tickets successfully.

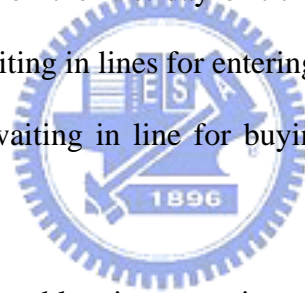
I made a list of all their required films with friends who lived in different areas. They lined up in different areas. After taking the number ticket, they joined the friend with the priority number ticket to buy all the needed tickets. Without mobile phones and Internet at that time, buying advance-sale tickets in this way is really more toilsome than today. Because of the hard work to buy tickets, we got far more excited and cherished our tickets much more. *Because of the hardworking procedure of lining up for buying tickets, we felt deeply that we did attend the annual pilgrimage of Golden Horse Film Festival (emphasis added).*

It seems that only by means of the hard procedure and ritual of waiting in line for buying tickets can art film fans acquire more pleasure of film viewing, and thus cinema going seems more sacred. As for the key to purchasing tickets, Momo is experienced; she says, “I always

hurry to buy season tickets of the advance sale. That is the cheapest. If I cannot consume them all, I share with friends. The season tickets are always grabbed up within a short time. So we should pay attention to the booking time and hurry to buy it.” Even art film fans cannot buy tickets successfully, not to mention general audience. Besides, Momo has some tips for entering to the theaters.

Even on the very day of film screening, I go to line up in advance, for there are no assigned seats for festival film tickets. So, I have to wait for entering in advance. I always go to the movies alone. While waiting in line, I read the film information in the programs and preview the films. Then, I enter theaters with expectation, finding a good seat, waiting for the movies to start.

Therefore, besides lining up on the first day of ticket booking day, we may frequently find a great many art film fans waiting in lines for entering to see the opening festival films or other popular films. Film fans’ waiting in line for buying tickets and for entering theaters makes film festival more sacred.



Yao-Bo recalled an unforgettable cinema going experience of Golden Horse Film Festival and says,

I saw an audience being dragged out of theaters by three or four staff and saying continuously, “I pay you money; please let me see this movie.” I often saw him those days during festivals. Maybe he failed to get the tickets for some movies; he asked repeatedly the audiences entering, “can you sell me a ticket for this film?” During the one that I saw him dragged out, he probably hid in the bathroom after the previous film ended, and came out to see the next movie whose ticket he failed to get. He just sat on the ground to see the movie, for it was completely full and there was no vacant seat for him. So theater staff found him and asked him out.

This audience must have been a super-duper film fan. Even if art film fans as he may



probably fail to get all the wanted film tickets, not to mention general audiences. To attend film festivals smoothly, one must get ticket information first. Only those who know the secret access can enter it.

Momo said that she used to read books in Eslite Bookstore and pay attention to DM of all sorts of artistic activities. Programs of Golden Horse Film Festival and Taipei Film Festival are usually placed in Eslite Bookstore. She learned information of other film festivals from “*Pots*.” As a result, she never missed any screening information. The name of “Eslite” Bookstore derives from “elite,” according to which we may know its target consumers focus on elites with cultural tastes, not on general public.

“*Pots*” is also called “the Voice of Generation Next,” the first free alternative weekly newspaper in Taiwan. One staff of *Pots* suggests that whether the tone of the Pots Box sites is compatible with *Pots* should take into consideration---being non-mainstream and alternative, speaking for the weak, and being art orientated.

On account of niche market strategy, the film information and programs are mostly placed in the places where art film fans appear frequently, such as Chinese Taipei Film Archive , ticket offices of Spring Cinema, and Tam-Shan Bookstore (唐山書店) and Eslite Bookstore. There are no screening information and *Pots* in King Stone Bookstore, focusing on popular books. Consequently, such little-known secret access becomes open only to art film fans, enthusiastic about films.

Entering the secret accesses, learning screening and ticketing information, waiting for the film ticket selling are the most important and the beginning of art film fans’ cinema going ritual. General public are not familiar with its accesses and easily turned down at the doorways, not knowing how to learn screening information. When this event turns heated, experienced art film fans have grabbed up all the film tickets. Year after year, art film fans’ cinema going habits do not alter much. Attending film festivals, experiencing the time and

space in film different from quotidian life, have become their annual ritual event. Film festivals and art film screening have become an event exclusively for art film fans, acquainted with secret doorways.

The special time and space of film festivals are not only ritual secret accesses but also a carnival to experience the unusual time and space. Film festivals as heterotopias in time and space offer a transient dreaming place for art film fans.

### III. Art Cinemas: Dreaming Places

Seeing movies is different from watching TV. Upon entering the dark movie theater, a kind of ritual behaviors occurs. After the lights turn off, we can only look at the big screen; all the feelings belong to us alone, without having to care about others, even acquaintances. The visual and sensual stimulation presented in the film screen is also different, for the scale of characters differs from that in our real life, which arouses our fine psychological attachment (Yi-Ju Shen 沈憶茹, 1998a:122).

In the cinema, viewers seem to be in a dreamland, a different time and space from that in our daily life. If we compare films to dreams, then, dark cinemas are dreaming places. As above-mentioned discussion, non-mainstream dreamlike movies are filled with codes; art houses are turned into art film fans' dreaming places. A filmmaker Duck explains it further and compares different dreaming experiences between art films and commercial films.

*The whole movie theater resembles a dreaming place, for it is closed, without light but only single illuminant. Art films are more easily to be seen alone without interruption and to arouse our special differentiation....Art films can arouse more our personal sentiments....You'll hear other sounds in seeing commercial movies, for other audience scream and laugh, being happy and sad together as collective*

consciousness---everyone has common emotions, horror and joy (my emphasis).

Obviously, seeing art films in art houses resembles dreaming more than seeing commercial movies. Art houses are more ideal dreaming places. All the audiences dream their own dreams, filled with personal emotions and different from others'. However, commercial movies have obvious and single theme. Audiences share common sentiments and become conscious of others' presence at times, which stops them from entering dreamlands and reminds them they are seeing movies and thus they are pulled back to the real time and space.

### 3.1 Development of Art Cinemas

In the past few years, under the hard Taiwan film industry and Hollywood powerful marketing influence, some hit awarded art films find few ways to screen and endeavor to survive in hardships. The formation of art cinemas offers development room for alternative films and opens a spiritual window for all the art film fans<sup>15</sup>.

Before November 10, 2002 when Spot---Taipei Film House was open, Xi-Men-Ding was the only film area where art films were frequently screened and where film festivals were often held. Most art cinemas are located in Xi-Men-Ding<sup>16</sup>. In its center, film fans arriving in art houses, the surroundings become quiet suddenly, and they seem to be exposed to another time and space. Lazycat says,

I enjoy seeing movies on a big screen in theaters, but I hate theaters full of audiences, for I am afraid of being bothered while seeing movies. *Going to the movies in a movie theater resembles dreaming, dreaming a sober dream.* I imagine myself to be the character, experience others' emotions, life and situation....Film

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.movie.com.tw/indexc.html> on 2002/01/21

<sup>16</sup> Compared with art houses in Xi-Men-Ding, Momo prefers Taipei Film House and Zhongshan Hall. "For there is a yard in Taipei Film House and a quiet square outside Zhongshan Hall, whose spatial atmosphere is similar to art films. I don't need to face another world after seeing movies," says Momo.

posters, newspaper clippings, film signs are put up everywhere in the cinema, inside which I can still have the feeling of dreaming. Yet I am thrown back to the real world upon walking out of the theater (my italics).

Lazycat dislikes “theaters full of audiences;” namely, he prefers art houses with only a small group of audiences. He is also fear being interrupted. According to Duck, commercial movies arouse audiences’ common feelings and bother one another easily; art films seldom bother audiences and always help them stay in dreamlands until the end. Seeing art films in a cinema in the noisy and crowded area, Xi-Men-Ding, is a special Heterotopia experience in time and space.

The opening of the art house, the Majestic Theater, begins the small theater trend (Lung-Yen Yeh, 1997: 325). Yet the screening equipment of Majestic Theater is not of high quality; furthermore, art film fans dislike its location in the noisy and crowded area Xi-Men-Ding. Yet most can’t but go to Majestic Theater for seeing alternative movies. Yao-Bo feels “Majestic Theater is really small, some films are only screened there, I have no choice but go there for movies.” Champignon complains that “there is no device of stairs in the theater; seats are not separated, either. I am always obstructed by audiences in the front.” Panpan also hates the crowd in Xi-Men-Ding. She says, “fortunately, Majestic Theater is right at the exit of MRT station. I don’t need to pass through the crowd to go to the movies and I leave immediately by MRT after films end.” She seems to be unwilling to stay in Xi-Men-Ding even for one moment. The ambivalence for Majestic Theater is common for most art film fans.

Chun-Hui Film Company (春暉影業) is originally a distributor, held thematic film festivals, Fanciful Film Festival, since 1997. In order to give Fanciful Film Festival “a home,” Spring Cinema was formally built in Xi-Men-Ding on June 16, 1999, which was actually a vertical integration between the distributor and the theater considering commercial benefits. And in the same year, Chun-Hui also rented President Theater.

Spring Cinema... is set up to lengthen the screening of such good films as *La Vie Rêvée des Anges*...The film festival fever started with All Star Film Festival held by Era; Chun-Hui's Fanciful Film Festival had good word of mouth. Besides, the long-term Golden Horse Film Festivals have also cultivated a group of audiences fascinated about art films.

Nevertheless, owing to the recent recession of domestic film industry, Chun-Hui have not held Fanciful Film Festival anymore since November 2000. Manager Lan of Spring Cinema suggests, "Chun-Hui invests too many businesses. It no longer focuses on purchasing awarded films from Europe as before. Fanciful Film Festival is still postponed." This film festival at a later stage was actually criticized by some film fans about its film selection, such as having too many queer films and erotic films, even many films of their clearances. In addition, many other distributors hold film festivals as well. All of these resulted in the suspension of Fanciful Film Festival.

"Sun Movie" channel was opened in November 1995. It screened mainly non-mainstream art films, thematic film festivals, noted directors series, etc. Unfortunately, it terminated on October 1 2001, for which many film fans felt pity. Manager Lan suggested that "Sun Movie" channel focused on screening alternative films, which did not appeal to advertising and therefore had difficulty managing the film channel. "Other film channels screened movies that were played in theaters and then sold at a much lower price to film channels. However, "Sun Movie" channel played awarded films, seldom screened in theaters. They had to afford all the fees of rights and furthermore they had no commercial sponsors, which resulted in their termination." I wondered whether "Sun Movie" was likely to work as paid channel as "Canal Plus" in France. Manager Lan answered, "we tried to cooperate with Pacific Digital Media but failed owing to the problems of fund and media environment. Except for pornography channel, no paid channel would succeed." What a pity!

Art film fans have ambivalence towards Spring Cinema as well as Majestic Theater in

Xi-Men-Ding. They have to go there for movies, yet they hate the crowdedness of that bustling area. Momo thinks,

Seeing movies is enjoyable...however, while I go to the movies in Spring Cinema, I had to be bombarded before entering the theaters. There are plenty of clothing stores in the front, a gymnasium center beside it. Oh, my! After entering it, it is very quiet inside. Seeing a film required thinking such as *Eternity and a Day*, it is completely the opposite between inside and outside. It is so messy and noisy outside. Upon finishing enjoying the films, I leave Xi-Men-Ding immediately wanting to find a quiet place and thinking about that film. I have crowdedness. I cannot keep in an agreeable situation if there are too many people.

It is not suitable to stay in Xi-Men-Ding after seeing movies, for I don't want my feelings toward movies to disappear. After seeing a film, I prefer a place with quiet, comfortable and open space like Zhongshan Hall and Spot, the Taipei Film House. The surroundings of most movie theaters are not good, so noisy.

Lazycat loves films screened in Spring Cinema, for "they are very good at selecting films." Yao-Bo says, "Spring Cinema has higher level as Eslite Bookstore does." They think Spring Cinema tend to select art films to play instead of commercial movies. As Eslite Bookstore, appealing for high culture, emphasizing taste, different from Kingstone Bookstore putting emphasis on popular bestsellers.

The above-discussed art houses, such as Spring Cinema and Majestic Theater, are smaller theater with smaller screens and fewer seats in comparison with other commercial theaters. Because of alternative films appealing to just a small groups of audiences, such movies are screened in small theaters. Accordingly, the appearances of art houses have much to do with development of small theaters.

Since 1970s, the appearance of multi-screens and small theaters was a great change in

Taiwan film industry. The CMPC's Majestic Theater was open in 1975 with two theaters, Yellow theater with 450 seats and Blue theater with 448 seats, which was a debut of small theater trends in Taiwan (Hsiu-Li Lin 林秀禮 95). In March 1979, Taipei UCI was open with Gold theater, Silver theater, and Bow theater, which enabled audiences to have multiple choices during the same period and which attracting a good many audiences. The era of multiple theaters came of age. Thereafter, many cinemas throughout Taiwan started to offer the service of multi-screens. Since 1985, the amount of cinemas decreased gradually while amount of theaters kept increasing, which showed that traditional single cinema declined and multiple cinema with over three screens developed. Within a couple of years, "theaters grow in increasing numbers, but become smaller and smaller" (Fei Lu 盧非易 239-40). After 1990s, multiple cinemas showed up with over ten theaters, such as Taipei Warner Village with seventeen theaters. On the other hand, only Ambassador Theater in Xi-Men-Ding remained a traditional huge and single screen, with 1234 seats.

The appearance of multiple screens represented global trend of low risk and multiple management strategies after the second oil crisis. Namely, all the eggs should not put in the same basket. The multiple-theater screening type and management mode provide more film choices to audiences, which lessened the risk of failure for a single film in box office and which raises the flexibility of screening as well. For example, cinema can change films at any time and spare the theater for another film with more success in box office. A popular movie can also screened in several theaters with different starting time for audiences to choose as they wish (Lu 239-40). Lux Cinema, for instance, has several theaters of different sizes. The small one plays general commercial movies, while the big one screens newly-released commercial movies. When its box office reduced after a while, it will be screened continuously in a small theater.

Spring Cinema also has such kind of multiple and small theaters, where alternative films are screened in a certain theaters and simultaneously commercial movies with box office

success are played in some other theaters, all of them have different starting time with interval of one hour. Majestic Theater has two theaters, one for alternative films exclusively, the other one for commercial movies occasionally. Art films do not appeal for its audio and visual effects and have fewer audiences; non-official film festivals and art films are mostly screened in small theaters.

### 3.2 Development of Film Festivals and Marketing Mechanism

When it comes to art films, film festivals should not be omitted. As I have previously described, the classification of so-called “art films” and “commercial movies” are merely boundary making mechanism and marketing measures aiming at specific groups of audiences. Film festivals are the main measures to market “art” films--- promoting films in a short period of time, at a specific space, intensively and in great quantity. Thus, they become an important way for art film fans to get contact with alternative films in great numbers.

There used to be only one annual Golden Horse Film Festival in Taiwan, which was alternative film audiences’ only chance to see non-mainstream movies in a great quantity. Every year, they waited eagerly for its coming. However, since 1990s, there have been plentiful film festivals of all sorts, official film festivals and civil ones. Thereafter, film festivals take place in increasing numbers in Taipei. The following are the development and background of the main film festivals in Taiwan.

#### 3.2.1 Large-scale Official Film Festivals

The large-scale official film festivals always center the island-wide art film fans’ attention and participation. Many audiences particularly hurry to Taipei for film festivals, which is an annual event and significant ritual.

These large-scale official film festivals have been held as cultural governance fields out of national characteristics in different stage. By such cultural events, the government endeavors to promote the city. By means of holding film festivals, these events attract the



media to report and augment the publicity of the city or the country. The larger scale the festivals are, the better promoting effects the city can achieve. The regularly large-scale official film festivals, such as Golden Horse Film Festivals, Taipei Film Festivals, Taiwan International Documentary Festivals, Taiwan International Animation Festivals, attempt to promote Taiwan by such cultural events. Especially Golden Horse Film Festivals are the most longstanding one and the largest scale one. It is always an annual event in film industry.

Golden Horse Film Festival is the most longstanding film festival and the largest scale one in Taiwan. In 1982, it started to be officially called “film festival.” Film festival organizers varied every year, and each one hoped to transcend the previous one. Therefore, all the festival films selected every year were really excellent. Most of them hadn’t appealed to film distributors and were rare great movies. They were all screened completely without any trimming, which interested film fans more (Jen Huang 94-9; Edmond Wong 101-2).

The two organizers in 1982 and in 1983, Chen Kuo-Fu (陳國富) and Edmond Wong, had some ideas about the film festival: they attempted to do some promotion of film-culture education by Golden Horse Film Festival except for its being a grand film event for domestic audience. Following such goals, it then has some traits. For one thing, focus on non-commercial films or high-quality artistic works, trying to balance the overwhelmingly commercial screening tendency in Taiwan. In addition, construct a topic by various organized works, making audience think about movies in a diversified way. Furthermore, introduce more film books and researches to achieve the function of film education. Finally, put emphasis on high-quality directors and works ignored by domestic media (Edmond Wong, 1985: 102).

Obviously, during the times when alternative films were rare, Golden Horse Film Festival seemed to be the only chance to see non-mainstream movies and it became art film fans and intellectuals’ essentially annual pilgrimage. Year after year, Golden Horse Film Festival had cultivated a group of art film fans, who became the consuming groups aimed by

subsequent civil film festivals. For example, the organizer of All Star Film Festival, Wei-Chen Tseng (曾偉禎), said, I “hope to attract the supporters of Golden Horse Film Festivals continuously” [to support All Star Film Festival] (Shan Cho 47).

According to the well-developed film festivals in the last few years, the Golden Horse Film Festival organizers, Chen Kuo-Fu and Edmond Wong seemed to achieve their targets. Many art film fans practiced well in the Golden Horse Film Festival and continue to support the other film festivals, such as Taipei Film Festival, also focusing on art films with the same goal of film education. It is a kind of cultural governance as well. Taipei mayor, Ma Ying-jeou, proposes a cultural policy of Taipei City, according to which Taipei Film Festivals take place regularly. It “provides the people of Taipei with the opportunity to become acquainted with Taiwanese and overseas films, increases people's interest in filmmaking, and brings together the resources of schools and society in order to cultivate and expand the number of people who appreciate film.”<sup>17</sup> Mayor Ma attempted to govern the city by means of culture. By film culture, by holding Taipei Film Festivals, he wishes “an urban construction with ‘culture’ and carries out his ideals of ‘constructing a city by culture.’” Besides, “an impression of a city ... lies in the whole cultural performance....The culture of a city has become the symbol of the urban characteristics and citizens’ living standard. Cultural construction has become an premier manner to promote city impression.”<sup>18</sup> Obviously, the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government attempts to promote Taipei citizens’ living standard and construct Taipei as a cultural city.

Wen Tien-hsiang once said in a film course of Chinese Taipei Film Archive, while serving as the Taipei Mayor, Chen Shui-Bian held Taipei Film Festivals, which acquired much good resonance. Mayors of other cities found film festivals could be their achievements in official careers and then imitated to hold film festivals. Yet in the long run, they became abrupt events just for official achievement presentation. Hence, Jane Yu (游惠貞) commented,

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<sup>17</sup> Reference from [http://en.culture.gov.tw/about\\_me00.aspx](http://en.culture.gov.tw/about_me00.aspx) on 2005/5/15

<sup>18</sup> From cultural policy proposal of Taipei City by Mayor Ma.

“the birth of Taipei Film Festivals has been closely associated with politics: film festival holding is Mayor Chen’s political views, he has to carry it out before his term of office. This is why the transformation of Taipei regime makes Taipei Film Festival full of unpredictable variables” (Jane Yu 91). The succeeded Taipei Mayor Ma promised to hold Taipei Film Festivals and put this project into his cultural policy proposal of Taipei City. Until this year, 2005, Taipei Film Festival has taken place for the seventh year.

After the big success of Taipei Film Festivals, many other film festivals take place in increasing numbers. Taiwan International Documentary Festival (TIDF) is one of them. It started in September 19, 1998 and takes place biennially. Over 100 documentary films take part in this film festival. Similarly, under the consideration of cultural industry, cultural governance and social function, TIDF has become an official regular film festival, with its attempt to spread some message and cultivate the general public.

Based on the thought of cultural creative industry and cultural governance, another international film festival shows up again, Taiwan International Animation Festival (TIAF). It started in 2003 and takes place annually. Take 2004 Taiwan International Animation Festival for example. It was sponsored by Government Information Office and the Department of Cultural Affairs of Taipei City Government, and only screened in President Theater and Spot, Taipei Film House, only in Taipei, without circuiting in other cities. It merely serves film fans in Taipei. TIAF is the first formal international film festival in Taiwan which focuses on animation. It also has the goal of cultural governance as other official film festivals.

These large-scale film festivals are actually sponsored by all the citizens’ taxes. However, they serve mostly and even exclusively for film audiences in Taipei. Even though some festivals have circuits in other “main cities” after they finish in Taipei, they are merely a part of films. There is a great gap between cities and countries. Non-Taipei art cinema audiences have to head for Taipei suffering from the fatigue and hardship of long journey annually. Some eager fans fail to attend the festivals owing to diverse factors. Kai-Jong chose to study

in Taipei just because of plentiful film resources and festivals in Taipei. Even after graduation, she is unwilling to return to her hometown, for she doesn't want to leave the film festival city.

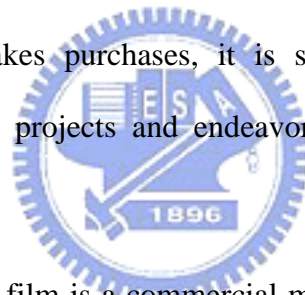
### 3.2.2 Small-scale Non-official Film Festivals

The appearance of small-scale non-official film festivals represents that of niche market of art cinema and commercialization of art cinema. They focus on non-mainstream motion pictures. They are held not to resist against Hollywood movies. They are merely a means of marketing strategy to survive under the powerful Hollywood screening system. They still follow the capitalistic logic with the target of commercial benefits. Such non-official film festivals, therefore, are actually commercial film festivals, different from what Edmond Wong called official film festivals that do not engage in making profits.

In 1990s, it was very popular that independent film distributors went to international film festivals to purchase films. However, Yu-Hua Yeh (葉玉華) of Meta Entertainment said that independent distributors are required to buy films by means of “set meal.” Namely, to purchase a big-cast commercial movie, they must buy two other films with few beneficial advantages (Shan Cho, 2002: 46). With time passing by, they have problems of stock films. Furthermore, even well-selected non-commercial movies are impossible to invest much promoting budgets as commercial movies. As a result, to promote these motion pictures in a limited budget, they attempt to create a thematic film festival by wrapping several movies, aiming at specific audiences, the art cinema fans. To promote films by means of film festivals may save a great deal of money on publicity, for it is easy to draw the media to report, regarding the film festivals as important events or news. A film distributor, Mao-Chang Huang once said, “film festivals are an influential promotion strategy.” All these films are awarded in assorted film festivals. During film festivals, the authorities invite film scholars or experts to write critiques or deliver speeches, which seem to endorse these festival films to be quality guarantee.

Plum who worked in film promotion department, said,

For film fans, each film is an art film; for film companies and film promoters, each film is a commercial movie to make profits. Especially for filmmakers, they hope their own works can make fortune. Most commercial blockbusters are grabbed up by Hollywood majors, with great budget and assorted advantages, such as cooperators, personal relationship and movie theaters, etc. We small companies have none of them and fail to buy commercial blockbusters. We can simply buy the ones with few commercial advantages. It is our boss who chooses what films to buy according to his own past experiences and preferences. Namely, he selects some films that are easily sold with higher box office. Or he gives us some trailers of his favored movies, asking us to select some that will be easily sold and more popular....After he makes purchases, it is subsequently the jobs for us film promoters, working on projects and endeavoring to promote the films to have success in box office.



What Plume has said, “each film is a commercial movie to make profits,” pointing out the real configuration of film festival and art cinema. Champignon, also working in film promotion, supplemented,

It is very difficult to purchase the films awarded in the global four major film festivals, for they are of great celebrity, drawing media to report. They cost a lot. We small companies just can buy movies from a smaller film festival at a remoter place, and then wrap them to promote. We depend on such art films to make money.

We package several movies with a theme. Sometimes, we must find a forced common theme. When we have some films that cannot be screened alone and have no common theme with the other movies, we still promote them by film festivals and find a forced common theme to connect them. Just us SKII eye cream have

nothing to do with SKII body lotion; if there are too many stocks, the promoters have to manage to closely connect them, letting consumers to buy the two products all together. Promoting is creating consumers' needs and desires; promoters and projectors are endeavoring to do such things.

These commercial film festivals take place by the name of "art cinema" as a measure of marketing distinction. By their differentiation from commercial movies, they interpellate art cinema audiences or those self-declared cultural elites. Consequently, film festivals become events for distributors make a clearance and make profits delightedly and for art film fans and cultural elites to participate with satisfaction. Shan Cho criticizes such manipulated events:

The "art" is merely a marketing trick...trying to hail consumers as cultural elites by distinctive lifestyle. Its goal is to make profits in the market...attempting to make consumers consume the signified value of "art cinema" while consuming its use value. They position themselves as outstanding elite class by differentiating art cinema from commercial movies. Therefore, commercial film festivals try to create a consuming atmosphere of elite style by manifold marketing measures in order to intoxicate consumers in their illusory imagination and make them ignore the economic manipulation and ruling of film festivals....It is neither films nor scholars' comments nor experts' critiques that consumers consume but the represented elite class and taste life behind the scholars and experts (47-8).

From the interviews of Plume and Champignon, both art film fans and film promoters, we may know that all the small-scale non-official film festivals are merely a trick of niche market strategy, aiming at art cinema audience by packaging movies with themes. The so-called "film festivals" just make commercial profits by the name of art, still following capitalistic logic. "Art cinema" is not a natural genre, but a marketing measure of distinction, a shaped film genre; most art film fans accept such classification and are intoxicated by such film genre and film signs. The more art cinema audiences insist on the distinction of art films

and commercial movies, the less they can accept the multiple-cultural space, Xi-Men-Ding, juxtaposed with difference. The more art film fans think highly of “art,” the more they want to take “art cinema” as cultural signs to different themselves from others, the more incompatible they feel with the real world Xi-Men-Ding after they awake from dreams.

## IV. The Space of Xi-Men-Ding Area

From film texts to space of movie theaters discussed previously, now I will continue to discuss the concrete space, the third level, the big space of Xi-Men-Ding, filled with movie theaters of all sorts. Besides the above-mentioned art houses, there are far more commercial theaters. The atmosphere of diversified urban culture should not be omitted, especially that of sizable youngsters and the old in this area, as well as the taste practice of consuming groups.

### 4.1 Hollywood Movies Shaping American Dreams

When people say, “Let’s go to the movies,” they mean actually, “Let’s go to the Hollywood movies.” With abundant fund, fascinating visual effects, and unique narrating manners developing for almost one hundred years, *American movies are wrapped into 90-minute dreams, sold to those film fans fond of dreaming. ....*The secret technique of Hollywood movies is to make audiences believe all the plots to be “true.” ..... While lights go darker in the theater and the first light from another world shows up in the big screen, a real world is shaped in our imagined space. ....If we keep thinking of a certain movie, it means that we have internalized that “imagined real” into our consciousness. (Ta-Yi Lee 李達義 Introduction II, my emphasis)

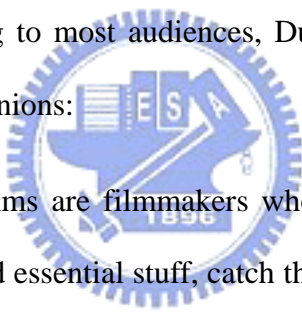
These remarks point out that Hollywood movies selling attracting American dreams to film fans fascinated about American dreams. Such movies are mainly screened in commercial theaters and are usually guarantees of box-office success, especially those blockbusters with

big cast are grabbed by most theaters to screen.

#### 4.1.1 Fascinating Hollywood Movies

When people talk about movies, they talk about American movies, which are the broadest and the most aggressive level of all American cultures. “The influence of cinema is the influence of American cinema ... every discussion of cinema made outside of Hollywood must begin with Hollywood,” said Brazilian filmmaker Glauber Rocha (qtd. in Roy Aremes 35). Ya-mei Lee (李亞梅) commented that “the remarks show to the point the hegemonic phenomenon of Hollywood in global oversea film market” (122).

The great investment and high budget, technological visual and audio effects, splendid scenes of Hollywood films are all guarantees of box office. As for the special effects in Hollywood movies that appealing to most audiences, Duck, who rejects to see Hollywood movies anymore, has different opinions:



Those who make art films are filmmakers who really understand special effects. They catch the basic and essential stuff, catch the visual and psychological illusion, with which they have to be familiar to make their special effects work successfully. Those who understand special effects well are not Hollywood filmmakers. They are just like kids driving big cars. Except for audiences’ screaming “WOW!” while seeing, nothing is left, for they are not touching.

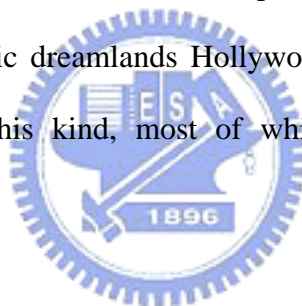
Spending money in movie theaters, most audiences expect to experience visual and audio effects that they cannot achieve in their ordinary life; most Hollywood movies meet such needs. On the contrary, going to the non-Hollywood, non-commercial movies, such as art films or Taiwan films is considered waste of money and is by no means worthwhile. Generally speaking, audiences trust in most American movies. Tsai Ming-Liang also observes that all the American stuff is popular in Taiwan, such as Hollywood movies (Rehm 99).

For general public, movies are entertainments and leisure, not art. Many film discussion



boards in BBS are not categorized in art, but in entertainment. For instance, BBS of NTU puts film discussion together with popular clothing, Korean soap operas, food, etc. in the leisure and entertainment boards, not together with literature and music in art and culture boards. So does China Times, where all the film information is set together in entertainment area with popular music and star gossips, not in art and culture part with classical music, fine arts and dancing. The advertisement of Showtime Cinemas about its rebuilding and reopening, reads, it “makes cinema going sensual leisure with low price and...no more luxurious enjoy.” It also regards films as entertainment, not art. Hence, most audiences expect and require movies to be full of entertainment, sensual stimulation, and amusements with touching and interesting stories.

Consequently, during the transient time and space in the theater, audiences dream pleasant dreams, entering fantastic dreamlands Hollywood movies have created. There are myriad Hollywood movies of this kind, most of which are able to satisfy audiences' imagination and curiosity.



#### **4.1.2 Movie Theaters**

Most movie theaters screen such kinds of Hollywood movies, for they are guarantees of box-office success. In Taipei, the most popular movie theater is the Ambassador in Xi-Men-Ding. There is only a single but huge theater with 1234 seats, a huge screen and perfectly visual and audio equipment. Only high-budget and big-cast Hollywood movies with star power are screened there. On its web site,<sup>19</sup> we may find the most detailed information and self-description about their technologically latest visual and audio devices and equipment. Accordingly, we may know it is the sensual enjoyment that the Ambassador Theater appeals to audiences. Especially in recent years, Hollywood movies focus on high-tech filmmaking with digital effects, which match the traits of Ambassador Theater very well. No wonder most

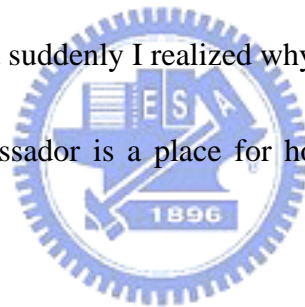
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<sup>19</sup> Reference from <http://www.ambassador.com.tw/ambassadorsource/actheatre/default.htm>

audiences regard Ambassador Theater as their first choice for cinema going while they want to see Hollywood movies. Shiao-Feng, coming from the southern Taiwan, felt much amazed while he went to Ambassador Theater for the first time. He said,

I used to go to a cinema with seven or eight small theaters in southern Taiwan. Coming to Taipei, I have heard many friends describe the great equipment in Ambassador Theater for a long time. For the first time, I went there as a pilgrim. But I felt wired while I bought a ticket, for the ticket office was so used and there was only one single theater. I thought maybe there are other theaters screening other movies; I just didn't know that. It was really ridiculous. How could it be possible that there was only one single theater? I have heard Ambassador Theater for a long time, yet no one emphasized it has only a theater. Entering it, I found it was really immense and suddenly I realized why there was only a single theater.

For Yao-Bo, the Ambassador is a place for holidays and a synonym for scalped tickets. He said,



The Ambassador is a place for movies on holidays, summer vacations or weekends. It is for the huge theater and visual-audio effects, not for the film texts...The Ambassador is a synonym for scalped tickets. Sometimes, when I managed to buy the tickets, they would be for the film after eight hours. The tickets for earlier time are all sold out. If we don't want to wait in line so long for tickets, we have to buy scalped tickets.

The Ambassador, focusing on its excellent visual-audio equipment, offends some audiences. According to the web site "Movieline My Film Critique," Adie says, "they turn on the lights and play their own music immediately when the story ends. Didn't they know there should be a complete film end?" Casper has the same feelings, "before films haven't really finished and there are still some words describing the subsequent development, theater staff turn on the lights and open doors to let go audience. That really shows disrespect for films

and audiences.” Accordingly, theaters’ putting emphasis on audiences’ sensual pleasure is not in direct proportion with their films and audiences.

Generally speaking, art houses show more respect for films and audiences by playing the whole films until the last part, the name lists of filmmaking and the end of soundtrack. For most audience will keep their film viewing feelings and recall some thoughts towards movies at that time, or some may want to understand the filmmaking staff and background, all of which cannot be interrupted and deprived of.

## 4.2 Atmosphere of Urban Culture

Xi-Men-Ding is a special area of film culture in Taipei, filled with fantasies. (Ching-Chih Lee 1998: 80)

“The film culture in Xi-Men-Ding is not merely the spotlight and core for Taiwanese film industry and film culture, but also brands the historical track of growing experiences and popular culture for much audience of different generations,” says Huang Chien-ye, the former leader of Chinese Taipei Film Archive (Ye Long-yan, 1997: 9). Accordingly, Xi-Men-Ding is always a significant place for most film audiences and for people fond of popular culture.

### 4.2.1 Spatial Characteristics of Xi-Men-Ding: Juxtaposition of Difference

Xi-Men-Ding is an important area for movie theaters and simultaneously a significant research place for urban subculture. The formation of these subcultures has much to do with how the local groups act. Holidays and evenings, it is youngsters’ paradise and territory; ay and night, the empty Xi-Men-Ding is a “happy center” for the old to linger and hang out. (Ching-Chih Lee, 1998: 129-30)

Xi-Men-Ding is a multi-cultural space juxtaposed with differences, with film culture, youth culture, elders’ culture, queer culture, and so forth.

In 1930s, it was the first time when Taiwanese film industry flourished; the subsequent

1960s to 1980s, was a golden age of Xi-Men-Ding. There were forests of movie theaters in Wu-Chang Street, which is the film street nowadays (Lung-Yen Yeh, 1997: 4). Nevertheless, the present film street is declining; the further we go down the film street, the less people we can find. It is a complete contrary to the terrible crowdedness near the Exit Six of MRT Xi-Men station. Despite of such change, Xi-Men-Ding is still a significant film culture area.

“Movie Salon,”<sup>20</sup> set up and located in Hoover Theater in the film street of Xi-Men-Ding in April 2003, “attempted to produce the unique film culture exclusively in Xi-Men-Ding.” Showtime Cinema was also rebuilt and reopen in Xi-Men-Ding in May 2004, trying to rediscover the prosperity of Xi-Men-Ding in the old days. Besides, “Film Theme Park,” at the bottom of the film street, Wu-Chang Street, is open since 2005 July. It will probably increase more vitality of film culture in Xi-Men-Ding.

Besides film culture, there are youth culture and elders’ culture. Chin-Chih Lee cites, “While the old and the young meet in Xi-Men-Ding, what kind of heterogeneous cultural features will be produced? Xi-Men-Ding is a vivid sociological experiment.” (129-31).

Xi-Men-Ding is also an important space of queer culture. “In a suppressed urban culture, homosexuals seem to find a place in Xi-Men-Ding for breathing. In the state of mess and complication, it spares some space for queer culture” (Chin-Chih Lee, 1998: 131). Non-mainstream voices and cultures are likelier to be accepted and respected in Xi-Men-Ding, with juxtaposition of difference. The reason why subculture there is so prevailing has something to do with its historical background and groups there. Another important reason is that films screened in so many cinemas stimulate the development of subculture. The foreign multi-culture presented in the alternative films inspires audiences’ ways of thinking, which helps Xi-Men-Ding become a urban area with the most vitality and multiple culture in Taipei (131). Seemingly only located in the margin of Taipei city can non-mainstream culture such as alternative movies, youth culture, elders’ culture, queer

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<sup>20</sup> In September 2004, “Movie Salon” was combined with “Performance Salon” into “Film Arts Institute.”

culture have chance to develop well.

Louis Wirth observes that a city should be regarded as a place of heterogeneity (Massey, Allen & Pile, 1999: 38). Xi-Men-Ding is constantly changing. It is a complicated spatial text full of heterogeneity and multi-culture. There are manifold events such as film festivals, stars' propagandas, street performances, activities of all sorts, official and non-official ones. It is a space juxtaposed with difference and filled with possibilities, belonging to art film fans, the old to everyone, and especially to the young as a popular culture consuming space.

#### 4.2.2 Reconsideration of Youth Culture

On the celebration of the second-stage pedestrian area finishing being constructed on May 21, 1999, Taipei mayor Ma Ying-Jeou declared, "shining Xi-Men-Ding has returned to Taipei City." It succeeds in hailing for the young by atmosphere of "popular culture." The pedestrian area was constructed as youngsters' "place for presenting themselves, exchanging and for leisure life" (qtd. in Heng-Chang Chi 54). Near Exit Six of MRT Xi-Men station is the Eslite 116 Building, on the exterior wall of which inscribed a huge blue word, "Y Generation," implying this consuming space for the young.



Figure 3.29 "Y Generation" inscribed on the exterior wall of the Eslite 116 Building.

Xi-Men-Ding is shaped into a consuming place especially for the young's popular culture, even a Hari City<sup>21</sup> (Heng-Chang Chi, 2001: abstract). When the young would like to go shopping, they think of Xi-Men-Ding. Many popular stars' propagandas appealing for the young choose to be held on weekends in Xi-Men-Ding. As Heng-Chang Chi finds, pedestrian area and Xi-Men-Ding on weekends has become a place where there are the most events and

<sup>21</sup> It means a city for people who are crazy for Japanese culture.

performances (83). Officially announced events towards the young usually take place here.

### 4.3 Taste Practicing in the Space of Xi-Men-Ding

In Xi-Men-Ding, the young and art film fans have completely different taste practice. The former present actively, while the latter show distinction from others in a low-keyed way.

#### 4.3.1 Active Presentation of Youngsters

Xi-Men-Ding is a stage for presenting...a stage for the young's cool performances, especially with other events on weekends, the whole Xi-Men-Ding is like a big stage. If you want to show or look at others showing, the pedestrian area in Xi-Men-Ding is the best place. By the experience of performing and being self-dressed (learning in the streets), the consuming space, Xi-Men-Ding, is sutured to its stage characters of being seen and seeing others. (Heng-Chang Chi 83)

These comments illustrate active presentation of youngsters in this performing stage. An art film fan Wanda gives a negative description of the young:

As a matter of fact, those youngsters do not have any thoughts but endeavor to pretend they really have some thoughts in their minds; they act just for showing, such as piercing holes, dying hair in strange color, being dressed in a wired way, etc. They do whatever they want to do. Xi-Men-Ding is such a place for them to do so.

Xi-Men-Ding is a multi-culture space juxtaposed with difference. Under such spatial characteristics, the young get to show what they are and be dressed at their wish, mainly in American Hip-Hop style or Japanese style. As for the young, Xi-Men-Ding is both a concretized space of the Hari phenomenon and a spatial practice of being fascinated about Japanese culture (Heng-Chang Chi 91).

#### 4.3.2 Low-key Distinction of Art Film Fans

Compared with Active Presentation of Youngsters, art film fans behave much more

low-keyed. Their recessive character and latent style also presents in their acting in Xi-Men-Ding. They are fond of going to Zhongshan Hall, Red Theater, Spot---Taipei Film House, Majestic Theater, Spring Cinema, President Theater to see alternative films. Through the bustling areas and crowds, art film fans go to the film festivals and go to the art films in a low-keyed way, with a different and secret goal from the other groups in Xi-Men-Ding. They keep the different goals secretly in their minds. Art film fans merely distinct themselves from the other groups secretly in their own minds. The active presentation of youngsters is very different from the low-keyed distinction of art film fans.

Art film fans know their differences of consumption style from other groups. Between the thrilling California Fitness and Rose Record playing music loud, and in front of bustling clothing stores, art film fans enter the Spring Cinema building quietly, buy film tickets and take the elevator directly to the ninth, tenth or eleventh floors for movies, different from youngsters to the fifth floor for playground and picture taking. Art film fans see alternative films there and enjoy the pleasure of film viewing and dreaming. Upon arriving Xi-Men-Ding, they go to Zhongshan Hall or the Red Theater secretly, directly and rapidly to see art films.

Awaking from dreams, art film fans have to leave their dreaming places and then enter the bustling Xi-Men-Ding. At that time, they just want to get away as soon as possible in a low-keyed way, unwilling to linger there for a while or do anything else. Momo said, “Xi-Men-Ding is in a mess, noisy and vulgar. *I leave right away after I finish seeing movies*, for I don’t want my feelings for movies disappear. Probably only when people see *Trainspotting* are they suitable to stay there after the film ends.” Panpan has similar feelings,

The young are making noise, so I hate to go to Xi-Men-Ding on weekends, for it is horribly crowded. That will disturb my mood to think about the movies deeply after movies end. *I always leave immediately after movies end. Fortunately, Majestic Theater and Spring Cinema are very close to MRT Xi-Men station, which may reduce the time I squeeze into the pedestrian area* (my emphasis).

The Red Theater, Zhongshan Hall, President Theater, haunted by art film fans, are mainly located in the margin of Xi-Men-Ding, where few youngsters are found. Majestic Theater and Spring Cinema are located near the Exit Six of MRT Xi-Men station, in the frontier of busy Xi-Men-Ding as well. Although many youngsters gather together there, art film fans seem to ignore them. Most of art film fans go to their destination directly, to the art houses at the edge of Xi-Men-Ding. They leave right away after finishing movies without entering the pedestrian area for food, hanging out or shopping. They even avoid going there on weekends. They seem to keep a vacuum relationship with the space and people there.

Bourdieu argues, “lifestyle is produced by agents’ delicate action and cognition, namely, habitus, not by random behaviors; lifestyle is a distinctive sign, as a function of inclusion (for those with the same taste) and exclusion (for those with different taste) to construct a collective identity” (Liu 14-5). Art film fans distinct their different taste and cultural consuming activities from general public and other groups in Xi-Men-Ding by means of seeing “art films” and attending “film festivals,” fascinated by a small groups of intellectuals.



## **V. Conclusion**

The time and space in films differ from daily time and space in real life. Art film fans escape from the reality into films, understand others’ feelings and different socio-cultures of different areas, and know better the world by imagining being in time and space of films. The sign-filled dreams resemble dreamlands, attracting art film fans into the dreams. The dark cinemas offer dreaming places, concrete space for entering the time and space in dreamlands. Art film fans, longing for heterotopias of films and cinemas, are patrons of movie theaters and film festivals. The one or two weeklong film festivals provide time and space in dreaming heterotopias intensively for art film fans.

Seeing alternative movies requires doorways. Nevertheless, not everyone knows the



secret access. Art film fans practice dream interpretation secret skills and develop their film appreciation competences. With such cultural capital, they are able to decipher dreamlike films and get the access to dreamlands. Their habitus and aesthetic taste have a great influence on their spatial preferences and feelings. They prefer cinemas with just a few audiences. Although they never talk to those fans whom they are unfamiliar to and has the same interests and taste with, they can still recognize one another. They prefer cinemas with broad and quiet open space surrounded; therefore, Spot, the Taipei Film House, and Zhongshan Hall have become their favorite dreaming places. They love better Eslite Bookstores, which symbolize elite culture, and elegant coffee shops, where they can sit down pondering about the films they have just seen and doing the film interpreting.

On the contrary, art film fans are turned off by the crowded and bustling Xi-Men-Ding, the stage for the young to show themselves, filled with various kinds of vendors and the young's popular culture. However, art film fans have ambivalence with Xi-Men-Ding, for there are many film festivals held and alternative films screened in the art houses in Xi-Men-Ding. They have to go there for movies. Even they go there, they just directly go to their favorite cinemas mainly located in the margin of Xi-Men-Ding, escaping to get into the crowds and most of them leave Xi-Men-Ding as soon as possible after movies end.

With the ambivalence towards Xi-Men-Ding, art film fans go to the movies and have dreams there in a low-key way. By seeing movies with different tastes and preferences from general public, they secretly show their distinction from others in their minds. Awakening from their dreamlands and get into Xi-Men-Ding juxtaposed with difference, what will occur to these special groups of audiences fascinated to alternative films? What sort of relationship will they have with other groups? The following chapter will discuss them further.

## Chapter IV Art Cinema Audience Awakening from Dreams

Yang Huan (楊喚), a poet writing many children's poems, passed away in 1954. It is said that he was hit by a train in a grade crossing owing to hurrying for an early movie in Xi-Men-Ding. This past event caught my attention, for it was an extreme case of "hurrying for movies" and simultaneously this event revealed its geographical peculiarity in Taipei when Xi-Men-Ding was considered a film street. During the times when railways had not been underground, going through a grade crossing for movies seemed to be a common experience for each art film fan.

The film opening waits for no one. It appears slowly like the prelude of music and always as a long long-take that makes you transfer from the real world into the film world as a wandering soul. If you skip the opening, you can still follow the plot. But you feel wrathful for losing something important.

As for Yang Huan, that was a difference between "temporary leaving the real world" and "permanent leaving" which audiences search for by cinema going. (Po-Yuan Hsu 許伯元 80)

### I. Art Film Fans' Relationship with Others

Art film fans go to the movies in cinemas. In the dark concrete space, they have dreams of all kinds and enter the film world different from the ordinary life. However, after they awake from dreams and get out of the dreaming theaters into the difference-juxtaposed Xi-Men-Ding, they will meet people having different preferences and goals from them. What sort of relationship will they have?

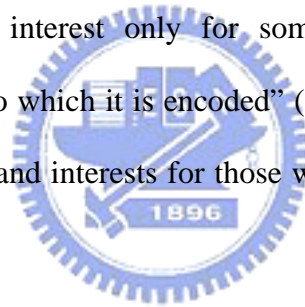
## 1.1 Youngsters' Imagination towards Art Film Fans

Louis Wirth observes, it is populous in a city, which results in spatial isolation and distribution according to individuals' tastes and preferences (Massey, Allen and Pile 35). We can see the young everywhere in Xi-Men-Ding, such as in the commercial building where youth commodities are mainly sold and in the pedestrian areas where there are plenty of clothing and CD stores. In the meanwhile, art film fans appear mainly in movie theaters, especially in art houses, or on the way to the cinemas.

In Xi-Men-Ding, we can tell the young and the old from other groups by their appearances. With or without interaction, people may see them obviously. Nevertheless, film fans fascinated by alternative movies have only interior preferences and enthusiasm about films, without clear exterior characteristics. They are not the main groups in Xi-Men-Ding, either. They have their own specific preferred consuming places entirely different from the young. Therefore, youngsters cannot see art film fans. The two groups meet without seeing and interacting with each other but have some interesting imagination.

Fan-Tong, a senior high school student, thinks those art film fans “must be elegant, over 25 years old, or they may not like and comprehend such kind of films, probably out of working requirements, such as film critics or reporters.” Shiao Bai considers those films “talking about big truth or doctrines. Only mature employees would see them.” A-Yuan thinks, “those art film fans must be very graceful and most of them are female. They must have much free time, or how could they spend one or two hours seeing a boring film.” In Rock's opinion, “teachers who teach Chinese, fine arts or sociology go to see art films.” Ting Ting, a university freshman guesses, “only employees, reporters, writers, painters, film critics or those students in literature or drama who are required to write papers will go to the film festivals.” Shuan-Shuan, a high school student, thinks, “those festival film lovers have good competence and comprehension in art, they are weird and different from common people.”

Another senior high school student, Shiao-Chi, have different outlooks, “only the rich and those searching for fashion will go to see festival films to show off and discuss with others in order that other people will consider them people with deep thoughts, knowledge, elegance and with senses of art.” Shiao-Chi’s seems to imply that what they do is a kind of “conspicuous consumption.” For many art film fans, art films are spiritual foods. For example, Bobo describes himself as “an animal that lives on film festivals” He said, “these art films are my spiritual foods.” Lazycat said, “art films are my living necessities. The major part of my life is movies.” However, for art-film haters, film festivals are merely a time-wasting and money-wasting activity and an elegance-pretended cultural activity. Just as J. Paroush suggests, “a piano is really essential for a pianist, but a luxury piece of furniture for a music-hater” (qtd. in Douglas and Isherwood 106). Bourdieu has the similar comments, “[a] work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded” (1984: 2). Art films are such type of works; they only have meanings and interests for those with cultural capital and deciphering competence towards art films.



## 1.2 Dreamers Meeting Ordinary People: Art Film Fans’ Senses of Place

Just upon entering others’ plots, we are touched. We know we are not in sorrow after seeing the leading characters’ struggles. We don’t need to get struck in the present disputes while getting into others’ broad world and recalling the abundant world.....When movies end, we know that is just a movie---even though you just cried or laughed in the cinema, you still come back, back to your own life. (Ching-Jong Wang 王靜蓉, 1997: 26-8)

Xi-Men-Ding has always been the resort for art film fans for a long time. Their senses of place are worth researching. According to a Taiwanese sociologist, Wang Chih-Hung, “sense of place” refers to the attachment and feelings toward a place; individuals or communities develop their deeply attachment to a place and endow with symbolic meanings by means of

physical or mental experiences, memories or inclinations. Art film fans' senses of places towards Xi-Men-Ding are mainly negative.

For instance, Bobo said, "there are too many people in Xi-Men-Ding, people of all sorts; I am always afraid to be robbed when I go to the movies there." Momo said, "Xi-Men-Ding is in a mess, noisy and vulgar. I leave right away after I finish seeing movies." Panpan also said, "the groups of the young are like this...making noise, so I hate to go to Xi-Men-Ding on weekends, for it is horribly crowded. That will disturb my mood to think about the movies deeply after movies end. I always leave immediately after movies end." They seem unwilling to stay in Xi-Men-Ding any moment after movies end.

Besides the crowdedness and noisiness of Xi-Men-Ding, most art film fans consider it belonging exclusively to the young and feel incompatible if they are slightly aged. A-Kai said, "this place belongs to the young, people over 30 years old feel incompatible to be there. Unfortunately, a lot of film festivals take place there." Prof. Chu has similar feelings, "I always feel incompatible in Xi-Men-Ding and feel some conflicts in comparison with those passers-by at the age of 16 or so. It seems that I am weird, especially one time when I bought a ticket for a queer film, I suffered from so much pressure." Shiao-Jane, a children drama playwright, also said, "I feel Xi-Men-Ding is really noisy. I leave immediately when I finish seeing movies. I always feel Xi-Men-Ding belongs to some specific group, for the young, for the senior high school students. I feel myself so old whenever I come here for movies."

Art film fans sometimes resemble aristocratic described by Bourdieu. He says, aristocratic cannot accept rugby sports because of keeping "bourgeois rôle distance." They think it requires physical flinging and rushing, which contradicts with the dignity of their body (1984: 214-18). Likewise, art film fans seem to feel the bustling crowd and space of Xi-Men-Ding contradict with their cultural and artistic elite tastes and therefore cannot accept such kind of space.

However, not every art film audience excludes Xi-Men-Ding; not every art film fan is so reluctant to go to Xi-Men-Ding for movies. Some even have positive senses of places towards Xi-Men-Ding. For example, Valley said,

*Xi-Men-Ding feels good. That is a place juxtaposed with cultures of all kinds. It is a place with various styles juxtaposed there. That is really great. I like Xi-Men-Ding.*

Every time I finish a film, I walking out of cinema as a wandering soul feeling hollowed. Walking into Xi-Men-Ding, I suddenly find so many people, young people. There is a drop from where I just was. The drop exists everywhere, even in eastern area in Taipei, in all kinds of cinemas. In other places such as in eastern area, I feel hollowed after seeing movies, I must endeavor hard to adapt to the real environment outside the cinema and to a rational adult world as soon as possible.

*Yet in Xi-Men-Ding, I don't need to try so hard to adapt. I can continue to be a wandering soul. I can walk in the street with my eyes empty. There are few cars in Xi-Men-Ding and many bright colors. People's dressing and architectures are all miscellaneous, very miscellaneous. The advantages of being so miscellaneous are I can continue to walk slackly. (emphasis added)*

Valley can continue to walk in a daze as a wandering soul, without having to adapt to the real world, the adult world, for Xi-Men-Ding juxtaposed with difference is able to tolerate alternative behaviors of all people. Lazycat is also identified with Xi-Men-Ding; he said,


I am at ease in Xi-Men-Ding. I consider myself belonging to that place. Xi-Men-Ding seems to be my territory. I often go to the movies there for three or four movies each time, and I also have some food there.

Miss Guan, who comes from Kaohsiung and works in Taipei, says, "Xi-Men-Ding is a young and bustling place. It is good. I can see the young in peculiar dress positively showing themselves, which is what I have missed." Shiao-Jane finds these young people "so young, so

cute and look leisurely.”

Accordingly, apart from some art film fans having negative viewpoints towards the young in Xi-Men-Ding, there are still some with positive outlooks towards the multiple-cultural space of Xi-Men-Ding. They do not distinct their leanings of habitus from people there purposely, but appreciate and look at the multiple-cultural phenomenon and space in an agreeable way. They realize that they themselves are one of the groups that consist of the difference-juxtaposed Xi-Men-Ding, and that they have to respect the differences of one another.

The group of art film fans is not homogeneous but has interior differences--- different thoughts, senses of place towards Xi-Men-Ding, and different attitudes towards film festivals. With time passing by and everything altering, film audiences changed as well. There are great differences between the middle-aged audiences and young audiences. Wen Tien-hsiang, a famous film festival organizer and film critic, finds,



There used to be only Golden Horse Film Festival. All the literature and art aficionados were sure to go to the film festival, which is a required event, for they could see many alternative and non-mainstream movies in the film festival. They had great patience. Many audiences escaped midway when some movies were screened abroad, yet in Taiwan all the audience see them until the last minute. No one left the theater midway and they were fascinated about the films and directors.

However, everything changed since 1990s. The present audiences are very ferocious, quick-tempered, rude, tasteless, and arrogant; they lose their tolerance and love for films and have no more real passion. For example, if a workshop for directors and audiences that was held after a movie ended delayed and influenced the next screening, audiences scold loudly, even in wicked words. If audiences feel the festival films are not good, they also blame on film selection.

There are now many film festivals of all sorts, providing audiences with many chances to see non-mainstream movies. With development of Internet, audiences get to express their viewpoints towards film festivals currently, which probably has something to do with their frequently criticizing film festivals. All of these film resources and facilities lacked before 1990s and make the differences between art film fans now and before.

### 1.3 Isolation of Groups in Xi-Men-Ding

As a French social and literary critic Roland Barthes suggests, a city is a place where we meet others (Barthes, 1986: 537). It is populous in Xi-Men-Ding, a place where we meet other people easily. Yet some choose not to meet others on purpose and not to interact with others. The cultural elites fond of art films often go to Xi-Men-Ding for movies, yet they leave immediately after they finish movies, not wanting to stay one more moment there.

As I have discussed previously, art film fans' outlooks towards the young and their senses of Xi-Men-Ding are mostly negative. As for another group in Xi-Men-Ding, the old, most film fans consider them related to sex. Miss Guan said, "I heard that some old man ask girls for sexual trade here. So I don't feel good to see those old man in Xi-Men-Ding." Wanda thinks "these old men strange; the average old men should like to go to the park or stay at home. I can't figure out why they prefer crowded places. I heard that they come here for sexual trade." Coincidentally, the young have similar impression as art film fans. For example, Rock said, "I heard from my girl classmate, she was asked by an old man, 'how about 3000 dollars? Would you want to?'" Such bias and stereotype come from "hearing" from others and from that people relay their imagination, incorrect messages and the erroneous reports and bias representation of the media. Whenever it comes to social facts about sexual trades, reporters always go to Xi-Men-Ding. They always report with stealthy shots. They shoot the takes of girls and then takes of old men, as the techniques of montage, guiding the TV audience to combine the two takes and interpret them in reporters' intended way.



Most people have bias towards the old men in Xi-Men-Ding, who are all considered to search for sexual trade and are seriously stigmatized. Xi-Men-Ding is a place filled with heterogeneity and juxtaposed with difference. The old men in Xi-Men-Ding are also by no means homogeneous. For instance, Mr. Lin, at the age of 67, is a great film fan. Being a student in his youth, he bought tiny stuff and had his uniforms made in Xi-Men-Ding. After growing older, he went to the dancing halls and lucky-money houses. Now, he goes to Xi-Men-Ding merely for movies. He doesn't go to hang out in those stores anymore. For "I has become much more mature psychologically and I am no more a young man," he said. He even criticized, "those youngsters always act blindly and are immature, shallow, always buying tiny items such as clothes or accessories. All their attention is caught by trivial stuff."

In the pedestrian areas, opposite "Golden Palace Dancing Hall" is "Old Liu's Beef Noodles," where most customers are old men; so is the boss. He said, "young people prefer chic style, but my shop doesn't have any decoration. The young never come but the old do." It was three o'clock in the afternoon when I interviewed them. Only two old men were eating noodles; some were playing Chinese chess, some watching, some were reading newspapers, others chatting, and still others just sit in a daze or pondering something. Mr. Chen, at the age of 82, said, "I often come here for fun. Everyone comes for fun. It is very warm here. Most people are veteran servicemen. When they come, they stay here for at least five hours." Another 77-aged old man, who didn't want to show his name, said, "some of them were friends since they were soldiers together. Some don't understand one another. If they get along well, they chat with each other; if don't, they do their own things respectively. That doesn't matter." The boss, Mr. Liu said, "even these old men come here without ordering anything to eat, I can't ask them out, for they have no place to go to." This "Old Liu's Beef Noodles" does offer a warm refuge and concrete space for the old; the boss, Mr. Liu, as an old man as well, also sympathizes them and gives them warmth psychologically.

Taipei City Government focuses exclusively on youth popular culture to do the urban

design and reconstruct Xi-Men-Ding, ignoring the other groups in Xi-Men-Ding, especially the old. The authorities concerned ought to pay more attention to other groups in Xi-Men-Ding. The urban space should not be purified by means of the single culture; the cultural claims should not be regarded as anodynes of the rough urban landscape (Shiao-Ting Chang 張曉婷 abstract). The old seem to be forgotten and excluded in urban designs.

Various groups coexist in Xi-Men-Ding but are isolated from one another. The young fascinated by popular culture and cultural elites enthusiastic about non-mainstream movies differ much in educational background, careers and leanings of habitus. They have different resorts in Xi-Men-Ding with few overlaps. They don't have interaction, either. The two groups go there, entering different but related rhythm. If they meet each other, such overlaps merely resemble closely squeezing in the crowded sidewalks. In the crowded area such as Xi-Men-Ding, different groups see each other and pretend not to (Massey, Allen and Pile 49).

According to the book *City worlds*, different groups in a city overlap but are likely to be isolated, indifferent and excluded one another (49). It is also true of the difference-juxtaposed space, Xi-Men-Ding. People meet others with critical eyes and one-way imagination. Different groups overlap but are isolated without interaction. Art film fans meet the young easily with negative evaluation; the young meet art film fans without seeing them and have their own imagination towards film fans. What they have in common is that they both see the old in Xi-Men-Ding and pretend not to and have negative imagination and evaluation. Most art film fans and youngsters have negative bias towards the old men in Xi-Men-Ding, and the old also have negative evaluation towards the young.

Awaking from dreams, art film lovers leave the dark dreaming places and come into the bustling crowds and the space in Xi-Men-Ding, with the abundance and heterogeneity of urban culture. However, their passion about alternative films suddenly turns into indifference and isolation towards their surroundings. Those elite culture fans, art film fans, seem to be cultural neatness freaks, compulsively wanting to avoid youth culture and keep away from

popular culture. In fact, art film fans are not special groups, but as ordinary people, having multiple statuses. They resemble fans of other fields; they are also consumers.

## II. Art Film Fans with Multiple statuses

Art film fans have multiple statuses. Sometimes, they act as dreamers and dream interpreters despising the young and Xi-Men-Ding; sometimes, they act as perfect consumers. At times, they are fanatics about movies, just like the other kinds of fans, such as popular idol fans, japanophiles, etc. While having the benefits of national resources, they keep satisfied but silent. Only when the national policies dissatisfy them do they criticize them from the angle of citizens. They frequently transform their multiple statuses without consciousness.

### 2.1 Everyone Is a “Fan”

“Fandom is a common feature of popular culture in industrial societies,” John Fiske observes in the very beginning of his *The Cultural Economy of Fandom* (30). As a matter of fact, fandom is a general socio-cultural phenomenon, not exclusively for popular culture. Film fans resemble idol fans or Japanophiles. Everybody is a fan. They search for their own needs, making a choice “freely” from the items that are previously selected by merchants. It is true of popular culture. It is also true of film festivals. Festival organizers choose films and then film audiences choose their favorites from the film screening list.

Some art cinema fans emphasize uniqueness of their film leanings, in an attempt to be clearly differentiated from general fans. They do not consider themselves “fans” but “aficionados” with special preferences about movies. Some regard themselves as fans the same as idol fans. However, each of them puts emphasis on his/her being “rational” fans. Kai-Jong said, “we art film fans are more rational, for we keep our enthusiasm in mind. We feel delighted to see good movies. We also keep our worship toward directors in mind. We support our favorite directors by seeing movies.” Valley said, “even though I see my

worshiped directors, I merely support them by participating in their workshops and concentrating on their speeches. At most, I ask for their signatures if I have the chances. I never have such irrational actions as screaming, asking for hug or kiss.”

They think they are different from Jolin fans or Beckham fans. Momo consider herself an art cinema “aficionado” not an art film “fan.” As Jenson argues, we should not deem the objects of an aficionado’s desire high culture and view the object of desire popular with the lower or middle class as fandom (19).

Plum also try hard to distinguish her from idol fans, she said,

What we film fans are fascinated about are films and creativity of directors. Even if directors’ personal lives are not good or with any scandals, they do not harm his or her brilliant film works. We still love their films. It is different when it comes to popular idols. What the idol fans are crazy about are idols but not music. The attraction of idols is greater than that of music. Singer idols require image shaping. Once scandals harm their image, their popularity is damaged simultaneously.

Although they say they are rational fans, they still have many emotional behaviors and thoughts and stay in an irrational situation. Lazycat said,

Films are my second life. I plan to keep single all my life, for I have had a girlfriend, which is movies. Movies are my only lover. Falling in love or getting married with someone will consume my time for movies. So I have had planed to keep single forever.

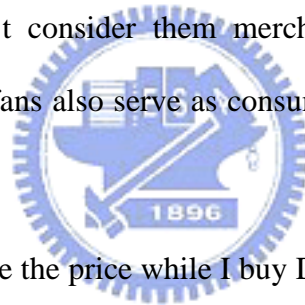
This is also a way of being crazy about films, just as many pop music fans wish to get married with their idols. As far as film fans are concerned, films are life, all of their lives. Without movies, life will become monotone. For popular music fans, idols are all their lives. Without idols, life will become dull.

As I have previously discussed, art film fans collect plenty of film-related objects, attend director workshops positively as crazy nomads. They move with film festival holding and art cinema screening. They behave just like pop music fans, who collect idol posters, pictures, CDs, attend concerts. They move with the concerts and propagandas of their idols.

Art cinema fans love films. They possess film cultural capital but lack popular cultural capital. The young love idols and popular culture. They possess popular cultural capital but lack film cultural capital. The two groups are just different in fields. What is similar is that they have no idea about the other field while they are fascinated by their own texts.

## 2.2 Consumers Claiming for Rights

As above-mentioned, many film fans spend money both on movies and on film-related products even though they don't consider them merchandises. Under the drive of their enthusiasm about films, art film fans also serve as consumers, spending money on films and on film objects.



Plum said, "I always compare the price while I buy DVDs or something. For example, if two store sell it at the same price, I will choose the one with a poster free." At this time, art film fans act as general consumers. I have mentioned in chapter two that Shiao-Mi used to take three film festival programs when they are available free. Once she had to spend money on the programs, even only 10 NT, she was only willing to buy one, which are also consumers' attitude with careful calculation and strict budgeting. Art film fans see movies as appreciators of cultural products. They also spend money collecting film objects to their hearts' content. Even though they do not want to admit these products to be merchandises, they are actually consumers in the market. Art film fans endeavor to protect their rights; sometimes, they have a strong desire for bargains as well.

Additionally, as discussed in chapter three, film festivals have been commercialized, as commodity exhibitions, information exhibitions, where consumers can see all the products

during a period of time conveniently. Likewise, art film fans may see all their preferred films at a better price during film festivals. At that time, all the film fans become strict and careful consumers, working hard on their screening schedules, sharing season tickets with friends, trying to see the most good movies at the best price. Some will attend Wen Tien-Hsiang's film selecting introduction for fear of booking the tickets of not-so-good movies. For they do not want to waste time and money and impede their time to see another good movie. Jonathan appreciates Wen Tien-Hsiang much. He attends almost all his film selecting speeches. Under special marketing measures of art cinema, art film fans also try hard to be good consumers.

To attract more audiences, film festival organizers usually invite directors to the theaters to talk films with audiences. If the next screening is delayed by the director talks, the audiences would scold loud, claiming for their rights of punctual film viewing as consumers. Kai-Jong thought, "if films are not as good as they are introduced in the programs, I feel unhappy and feel being cheated by the film programs." Some film audiences even blame on Internet. For they feel their consumers' rights are harmed and express their wrath about it. Art film fans, hence, are like other people; they are also perfect consumers.

### 2.3 Contingent Awareness of Citizenships

Art film fans in Taipei are happier than those in the other parts of Taiwan. Taipei has the most film resources. Those in other cities fail to go to the film festivals very often. Otherwise, they must tolerate the hardships of long journey to Taipei. Film fans in Taipei are used to abundant film resources and take them for granted. Only film fans outside Taipei pay attention to it and care about it, while Taipei film fans keep silent about it.

Nevertheless, while the urban designs or policies dissatisfy them, they have their own viewpoints from the angle of Taipei citizens. They become aware of their citizenships only in contingent moment. For example, they have many questions and opinions toward the spatial design of Xi-Men-Ding in Taipei:

Why Xi-Men-Ding is design based on the youth culture. Are the young so important? Why an art area isn't designed? (Ming-Hsiang Chang)

When on earth will the film theme park in Xi-Men-Ding be finished? That open space has been surrounded for a long time, with the fence inscribed "Film Theme Park." After several years, it is still surrounded. We don't know when to finish and when to start to use? Nor do we know what kind of place "Film Theme Park" is designed? We don't know all about it. (Shiao-Feng)

Xi-Men-Ding is not designed to be a film special area. We have food, everything there. If possible, I hope it is designed to be a film area, with many special film poster stores, diverse film shops. It had better have much film stuff that cannot be found in other places but only in film stores in Xi-Men-Ding. Thus, as long as we want to find something about films, we just go to Xi-Men-Ding. That will be great. What a pity it is not. (Yao-Bo)

Besides the disappointments and disapprovals about the space of Xi-Men-Ding from the angles of film fans and space users, art film fans also have some complains and suggestions about film festivals. For instance, Lazycat declares, "the place should be selected well. I hate Warner Village with terrible order. In addition, more workshops should take place. Film festivals should also take place in other cities. They should not be held always in Taipei. Film selecting ought to be more prudent, audience-orientation must be avoided." Shiao-Feng has similar outlooks, "those films with bigger success in box office and popular with more audiences tend to be commercials movies."

## 2.4 Art Film Fans with Difficulties Returning Home

The great gap between cities and countries results in art film fans' difficulties returning hometown. Duck suggests that it is the biggest pity for all the filmmakers. He sighed,

I come from the middle and south of Taiwan. Only after I come to Taipei do I find

that how big the gap it is. There is a serious problem of gap between cities and countries in cinema going. Almost all the film festivals take place in Taipei. Film books and all kinds of film resources gather in Taipei as well. Therefore, almost all the filmmakers stay in Taipei. Even if I would like to return home, to shoot something about the local place, the hometown, I cannot return home as I wish. We have some type of self-division in disorder in filmmaking. In Taipei, we leave our hometown and family, we cannot find the exits of creation. However, the destiny of filmmakers is we cannot leave Taipei, for you cannot create in a place without any stimulant of film festivals. You cannot work in a place without any film resources. You cannot finish filmmaking alone, for you cannot find any other filmmakers in the hometown to cooperate. All of them stay in Taipei.

Film fans living outside Taipei tolerate the inconvenience of film festival holding in Taipei and art film screening in Taipei all the time. For example, in the film board of a BBS in NTU, film fans discuss an Indian film, *Devdas*. Kunst is very angry and said, “all are screened in Taipei. We cannot see it in Tai-Chung, nor in Kaohsiung, nor in Hualien. I have to go to Taipei to see *Devdas*, too.” Cleann said with anger, “this movie is only screened in Taipei, which irritates me a lot. Thus, I have to stand the hardships of long journey to Taipei for the movie. It is really annoying.”

Many film fans, coming from middle and south of Taiwan and working or studying in Taipei, do not want to tolerate the life without film festivals or film resources as ever before. Consequently, most of them do not return to their hometowns reluctantly. Kai-Jong said, “if I return to my hometown to work, I have no more film festivals to attend.” Therefore, she continues to stay in Taipei looking for a job for the plentiful film resources in Taipei. Only Champignon and Plume have different thoughts. They are both art film fans and film promoters. With the film mission to improve the film environment in Kaohsiung, they expect to return to their hometown to work, to work in Kaohsiung Film Library, where film



professionals lack. With their film enthusiasm, professions, and working experiences in Taipei, they wish to improve the film environment in Kaohsiung one day.

Art film fans think that seeing alternative films for a long time may cultivate their human and social concerns, and they are also concerned about national policies. However, they are conscious of their citizenship and think about the inadequacy of national policies only when their rights are ignored or harmed. Art film fans who care about the serious problem of great gap between countries and cities are all from the non-Taipei places where there is a great lack of film resources. They come to Taipei for work or for studies and produce such sighs. To continue to enjoy the resources, they become art film fans with difficulties returning home. On the other hand, art film fans who has always been living in Taipei say nothing about the gap between cities and countries, and they take the abundant film resources for granted. They never think it would be a problem.



## Chapter V Lingering Goodbyes

This is really a weird world, a weird film, a fantastic life, like....you have a sober dream at night in insomnolence....like a realistic dreamland, hard to explain and interpret....You linger there finding more of its perplexing and charming parts and wanting to undo its somniloquy-like lines. I contemplate and speculate about them a thousand times. (Chi-Hsing Chou 周啓行 92-94)

An art cinema fan, Chi-Hsing Chou, see a dream, *Mulholland Drive*, a dream weaved by David Lynch in 2001, making him experience a “weird” and “fantastic” dreamland. Art film fans, who awake from dreams, linger between the real space and imagined space, exploring the perplexing parts repeatedly, attempting to interpret, “to undo its somniloquy-like lines.” He is a typical art film fan.

In Chapter two, I have described some art film fans’ stories in New York in the documentary film, “Cinemania,” which are at all ages. However, in my research, the interviewees of art film fans tend to be younger, most of whom are students or young people who just graduated from university not long ago. Why do differences between the two places in age come from? What are the characteristics of art film fans in Taiwan?

American Hollywood film industry has developed for a long time and it has even become prevailing culture and monopoly in film market. Thus, it is natural that New York, with the most cultural resources, centers the most numerous crazy film fans of all ages. On the contrary, Taiwan started to develop film industry very late. The so-called Taiwanese art cinema, “Taiwan New Cinema,” started in 1982. It is only twenty years since then. In 1950s, people were permitted to study abroad. It became popular after 1960s. Subsequently, Film Library (the present Chinese Taipei Film Archive), founded in 1978, introduced a number of art films and works of masters from Europe, America and Japan, which aroused a new

aesthetic trend in domestic cultural fields then. There were more and more film aficionados study films abroad and return to teach film studies in universities. The formation of film study fields has no more than thirty years. As a result, the duration of art film fans' fandom seems shorter, film fans younger and fewer compared with those in New York.

Owing to the hardships of Taiwan's international status and national identity, whatever activities that can promote Taiwan's publicity, are highly thought, regarded as sacred and sublime by the authorities. For example, under such circumstances, the international prize-winning Taiwan cinemas are considered sacred and described as diplomatic achievements. Other city or county governments also presents their political achievements by such cultural activities as film festivals. Beginning with Taipei Film Festivals by ex-Taipei City Mayor Chen, others started to imitate him, with the sacredness of film festivals and art films exaggerated, and the characteristics of elite culture emphasized, which enables many people to indulge in such sacred atmosphere. As a matter of fact, the apparently resembled art film festivals are actually commercial movie festivals, are merely the result of a commercial marketing strategy, following capital logics, with the ultimate target of success in box office.

Film Festivals are the most brilliant marketing strategy to promote "art" films. The film selecting process is exactly a boundary making mechanism. The interpretation rights of film genres go to the authorities of film festivals and festival organizers. They possess the power to make the boundary. Once the festivals films have been selected, general public take it for granted that festival films must be "art" films, which is actually a myth. As long as films have ever won prizes in international film festivals or screened in large-scale film festivals in Taiwan, such films with the aura of film festival prizes may be operated as the best commercial marketing advantage to endorse their quality. In fact, films are films. There is no distinction of "art films" and "commercial movies." Besides serving as marketing measures, by such distinction mechanism, art film fans differentiate themselves from others, keep the boundary against general audience, and satisfy their imagination of being cultural elites.

Likewise, the same as many other cultural activities that people participate in by terms of cultural activities in a carnival manner, eating and drinking everywhere, which are actually consumers. Most cultural carnivals, organized by assorted local governments, are of no differences. Governments do the commercial promoting by the name of local culture presentation; general public do the shopping also by the name of cultural participation. It seems that everything with the name of culture or art may wear the aura of being sacred and artistic. Under such nationally cultural trends, more and more invisible film fans enter the kingdom of “art” films as consumers. They appear only during film festivals, consuming the sacred atmosphere of “art” films and symbolic signs of culture. Nevertheless, this thesis does not do the research about whether there exist some conflicts or boundary making problems between this group of film festival consumers and art film fans which insist art for art, or how the latter consider the former. Maybe the subsequent researchers can discuss them deeply.

Looking back to my research process, I have smooth in-depth interviews. Most art film fans were happy to have the in-depth interviews with me, saying that they were excited to know someone was going to do a thesis research on them, on art film fans. They even thanked me. Each interviewee lasted mostly for three hours or four, even six or seven hours. They said that they were so happy to talk about their favorites, about films, for they had few chances to do that. Their enthusiasm to my research makes my interviews go smoothly. Art film fans are low-keyed but passionate, which may be another characteristic of them.

There is no good social welfare system in Taiwan; pressure, long-time work and life burden stop film fans from continuing their fandom in films. Conflicts between work and interests are most film fans’ torment and anxiety. Hurrying for films one after one and attending film festivals to their hearts’ contents seem to become students’ exclusive rights. After graduation and getting into career and even family, art film fans can only see a few films and start to fade their fandom gradually. Especially those film fans over 30 years old would sigh, “Enthusiastic about movies? That was long ago while I was a student. Now, I

have to earn my living. How could I have time for movies?" Thus, fewer and fewer long-term film fans. The elder film fans decrease little by little, and cultural agents and formation fields continue to produce younger art film fans increasingly. However, when they grow older and enter their career and family, they leave the fandom gradually. It always goes as a circle. Art film fans seem to be young ones all the time.

In addition, the development in Taiwan always focuses on the north and ignores the south of Taiwan, which is also true in film resources. The film fans, not living in Taipei, have to hurry to Taipei suffering from hardships of traffic for movies and film festivals. Those who work or study temporarily in Taipei, are faced with the dilemma between staying for film resources and returning home. It is another torment for art film fans.

Awaking from dreams, young art cinema audiences are either dipped in films alone at home or in the movie theaters, or on the way to the next film in a hurry, in Xi-Men-Ding with many movie theaters gathering, in Taipei with film festivals taking place one after another. And you? Where are you?

