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## SCUM Job: Group Wants You to Watch Cult Films for Free

Posted on 25 February, 2014



If you've ever felt bored or uninspired to catch the slew of movies on offer at your regular cinema hangouts, know that you're not alone. Most avid moviegoers would've encountered this feeling at some point: the discouraging realisation that a lot of the stuff that's most accessible to us is formulaic and repetitive. So you start to yearn for films that are different, films that will fire up your imagination and hopefully invigorate your love for cinema.

Enter **SCUM Cinema**: A burgeoning Singapore-based collective that reviews and posts news on cult films; and very recently, screens offbeat titles for the public for free. Initiated by a trio of childhood friends who have grown into men of eclectic taste, Society for Cult and Underground Movies, or simply SCUM, wants to open up doors to a whole new world of film options for audiences here and perhaps even enrich their movie diet.



(Left to right) Aaron Corbett, Anonymous and Herman Ho are boyhood friends and the minds behind SCUM Cinema

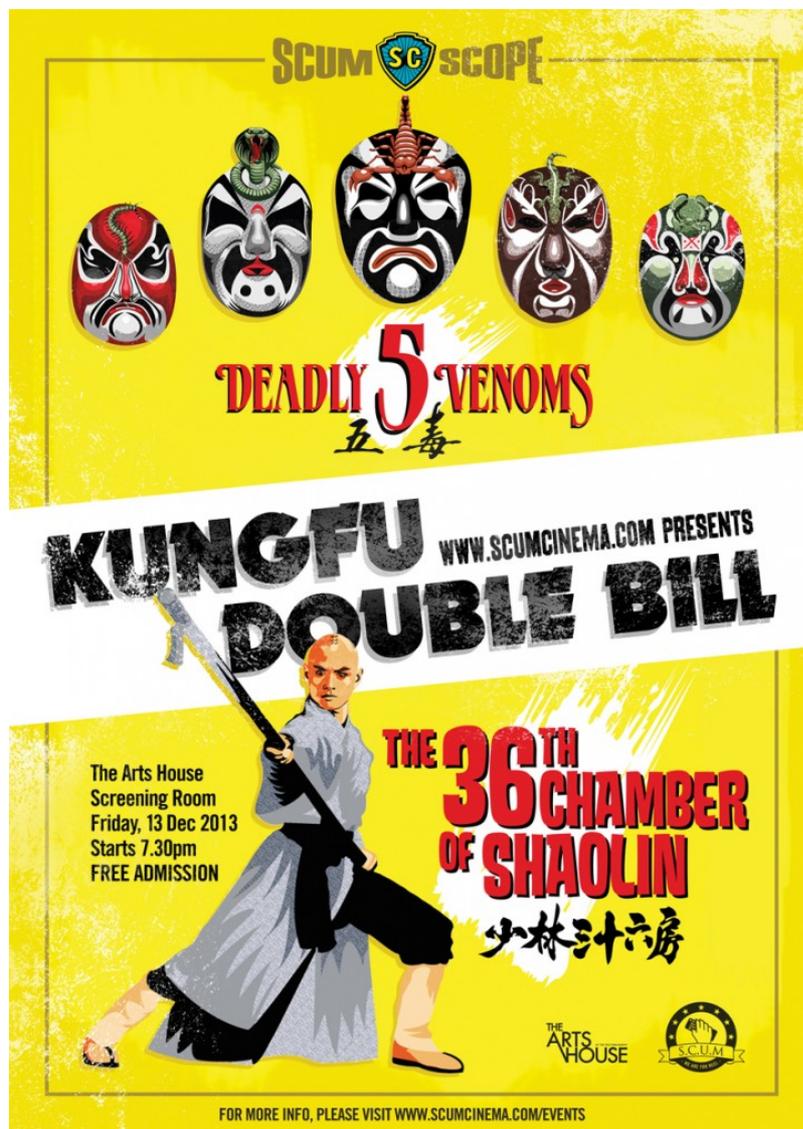
"We're not being exclusivist. If you enjoy popular films and blockbusters like Transformers or I Not Stupid, that's perfectly fine. We just want to

demonstrate that there's also so much more to explore in cinema by discussing and presenting films that are a little more unusual, imaginative and pushes the envelope like cult, genre or even some b-grade flicks," says SCUM operative Herman Ho, a designer by trade, who considers provocative Chilean filmmaker Alejandro Jodorowsky one of his favourite directors.

"Our focus is films that are off the beaten track. If we find a gem that we think it's good and worth sharing regardless of genre or which era it's from, we'd recommend it on our website or hopefully even present it at screenings. We definitely want to organise more screenings in the near future and hopefully even a film festival," second SCUM operative Aaron Corbett chimes in. Corbett, who is in the communications line, is partial to films by late Polish filmmaker Krzysztof Kieslowski, director of the seminal *The Three Colours Trilogy* and *The Decalogue*. The current plan is to sustain a series of bi-monthly free screenings held at The Arts House Screening Room. For their inaugural event, which was a Kungfu Double Bill featuring two of Shaw Brothers' classic kungfu flicks *The 36<sup>th</sup> Chamber of Shaolin* and *Five Deadly Venoms*, almost all the seats were booked in a matter of three weeks.

It drew a motley crew of viewers ranging from hardcore cinema buffs to kungfu movie enthusiasts to regular cinemagoers who were game to watch something a little more atypical. "There were a few older audience members who came up to us after the screening and thanked us for screening the films and giving them the opportunity to catch such classics on the big screen. So that was very meaningful for us – to know that there are people who appreciate what we set out to do. It is also proof that there really is a demand for these films," Ho recalls.

The screenings are completely funded by SCUM Cinema so as to keep it free for the public. However, they produce original merchandise designed in-house such as postcards based on the characters from the movies being featured, which are for sale. Those who attend the screenings have the option of purchasing them and, in this way, contribute to the cause.



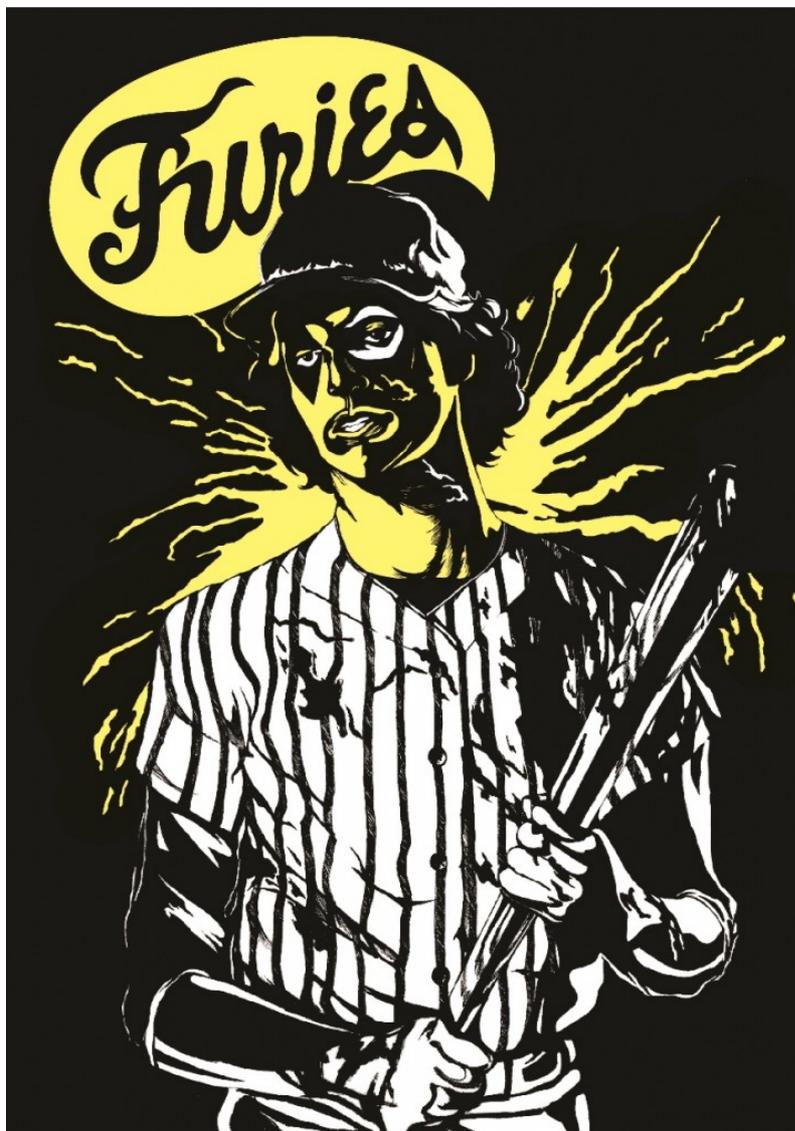
So SCUM Cinema really is a passion project – a journey that started in 2007 and had its fair share of roadblocks and obstacles. This is where a third SCUM operative, who mysteriously wants to be known only as Anonymous, comes into the picture. Perhaps the eccentric energy, the enfant terrible of the group, Anonymous champions b-grade flicks and loves discussing movies such as those from the legendary b-movies producer and director Roger Corman and schlock, satirical movies rolled out by independent film production and distribution company Troma Entertainment, a cult favourite. Also a boyhood friend of Ho's and Corbett's, Anonymous got the ball rolling, organising four to five screenings at various venues over the years almost guerilla-style. But they proved difficult to sustain and the events were few and far in between.

But despite the hiccups in the past, the friends decided to reinforce their efforts; combining experiences, contacts and their genuine love for cinema in the hopes of gradually developing this project. "Other than our desire to share unconventional films with others, we also see a gap that we want to fill. There is demand for cult, underground, genre and b-grade movies especially among big movie buffs but there isn't a place

yet for them to go. Hopefully through SCUM Cinema, we get to reach out to them and vice versa and form a kind of community of like-minded film lovers," says Ho.

With their keen sense for the bizarre and a predisposition to dig up and discover interesting gems to share, we have no doubt that we can expect wonderful things from SCUM.

#### Details of SCUM Cinema's Second Free Screening



Title: The Warriors

Venue: The Arts House Screening Room, 1 Old Parliament Lane, Singapore 179429

Date and Time: 28 Feb 2014; 8.30pm

Rating: M18

Admission is free but seats must be reserved by e-mailing [scumcinema@gmail.com](mailto:scumcinema@gmail.com) with your full name and number of seats you'd like to secure (maximum of 4 seats per e-mail request).

Synopsis: Directed by Walter Hill (Bullet to the Head, 48 Hrs), The Warriors is a 1979 cult action thriller set in alternate reality New York City. One night, all the street gangs are summoned by the leader of the most powerful pack and he proposes a truce. But when he is publicly assassinated, one of the gangs present, The Warriors, gets framed for it. Now they must fight their way home, through all the other gangs that have sworn vengeance. It was largely panned by film critics when it was first released but has gained cult status over the years, appearing in several magazines' top cult movies lists including Entertainment Weekly; and has even influenced pop culture. *Can you dig it?*

For more information about the screening and SCUM Cinema, visit: <http://scumcinema.com>

*IMAGES COURTESY OF SCUM CINEMA*

*TEXT BY DIANA OTHMAN*

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Category: Film    Tags: Aaron Corbett, Anonymous, cinema, film, Herman Hb, movies, SCUM Cinema, singapore, The Arts House, The Warriors

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