

SPECIALE Film festivals and affective spaces: Singapore's Majestic Theatre

Film festivals may be considered, variously, as sites of exhibition and circuits for distribution¹ marketplaces for sales and city branding; and increasingly also as producers of new work² Festivals are also cultural gatekeepers and taste-makers, and can raise our awareness to certain causes, marginal groups, new aesthetics, alternative voices. Festivals are also media events, “spaces of flow”³ located in fixed places but transient in time: “the festival, a market place, a designated space of transaction, brings together the determinants of film culture under the duress of space-time compression or the media event”⁴. The transitory nature of film festivals poses two main challenges for research. The first challenge is how one might research and write about an event that is over and already passed⁵, and that leaves behind precious few material traces. Catalogues, reviews and reports can convey something of the occasion but very little of the atmosphere — what Cindy Wong describes as “a week or two of glitz, buzz, myriad screenings, and jumbled events”⁶. These print materials are nonetheless important and constitute part of the discourse of the festival as an event⁷. Festival histories as memoir, constitutes another form of discourse. These are often written by festival insiders, usually a programmer or a critic, who can offer some insight into the festival. These memories can sometimes seem to be dominated by accounts of wild parties and extravagance, though not always⁸.

The second challenge is about how one might perform the relevant research and write about an event that is ongoing, even if one is able to be present for a part or the entire duration of the festival as it is happening. As the nascent field of film festival studies continues to establish itself with a growing body of work⁹, and because of the sheer size, scope and diversity of festivals, many different methodologies are being employed, and often mixed together, including ethnography¹⁰ and network theory¹¹, intersecting with cultural studies approaches that look at festivals as institutional structures of (state) power¹². By and large, the research focuses on festivals as social-cultural-political phenomena. In this article, I explore these challenges within the critical frame of the study of *affect*, through the interlocking relationships that operate within the dynamics of a festival. These relationships may be understood as a political economy functioning through cultural and state institutions and market imperatives¹³, along with what can only be called the *affective encounter* that make up the experience of festivals.

Many people go to festivals for the *pleasures* they offer, though not necessarily for the same reasons. These pleasures are sometimes articulated as pleasures of discovery, to see something they have never seen before or have not had the chance to encounter, be it new aesthetics, genres, subject matter, even entirely new cinemas¹⁴. What the festival environment provides is not just a place where a group of films are screened and watched by an audience — that could happen in any place with adequate resources, and much more easily in the digital age — but a mode, or modes, of engaging with the films that shape the experience of cinema as an affective cultural encounter. By turning to affect in my discussion, I do not make a case for reading affect in the aesthetic form of film¹⁵, nor for the emotional experiences of the spectator as they watch films¹⁶. Rather, I employ the notion of affect as exemplified by the series of vignettes compiled in Breakwell and Hammond’s edited collection, *Seeing in the Dark* (1990). Now out of print and compiled at a time before the “turn to affect” had taken hold in humanities research, the collection brings together what is written in the blurb as “a bizarre, funny collection of movie tales”¹⁷. These tales collected from friends and later friends of friends of the editors are not ethnographical studies, yet the sheer diversity of affective encounters they record of the cinema — ranging from memories of childhood terrors and delights to smells in the theatre — testifies to the fact that this quality of experience remains under-researched, or at least under-acknowledged in scholarly discourse on cinema. As Breakwell and Hammond write in their brief introduction to the compendium:

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Measuring applause does not reveal that the movie was memorable for the woman in the third row because the building on screen reminded her of where she went to school and all those childhood memories came flooding back intercut with the film while the auditorium gently shook as an underground train passed beneath and cigarette ash fluttered down from the balcony in the projector beam¹⁸.

In the introduction to their edited volume *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010), Seigworth and Gregg attempt to delineate what they see as the liminality of affect. They ascribe affect as a state of “*in-between-ness*” that “*accumulates* across both relatedness and interruptions in relatedness, becoming a palimpsest of force-encounters traversing the ebbs and swells of intensities that pass between ‘bodies’”¹⁹.

The following brief analysis is distilled from personal encounters, the passing of “bodies”, experienced during the Singapore International Film Festival between 1997 and 2003, where I worked on different occasions as a volunteer and a paid freelancer, taking advantage of the job perk to watch as many films as I could fit into a day (usually up to four). These are *affective encounters* in that they are not cited with empirical certitude but are reliant on impression, memory and personal notes. I do not reproduce verbatim dialogue or name names. I am not writing an ethnography and was not consciously researching one at the time. Instead I draw on Mica Nava’s approach on writing of her own multiple affiliations “to integrate memories, the reworking of events, historical context and argument”²⁰. Through this personal engagement, I explore ways of thinking about the affective spaces within the film festival that cannot easily be documented, and indeed about the festival as an affective space in itself, both physical and metaphorical. I offer here a brief personal encounter with the space of one specific movie theatre — the historic Majestic Theatre located in Singapore’s Chinatown district, which was used as a screening venue during the Singapore International Film Festival in the 1980s until the theatre’s closure in 1998, before it was turned into a shopping mall in 2003. I approach my experience of the Majestic in the spirit of Gaston Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space* (1958), where he describes the attraction, and a certain magnetism, of intimate spaces: “Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor. It has been lived in, not in its positivity, but with all the partiality of imagination”²¹. Although Bachelard writes largely of the spaces of a house and home, its interior spaces and its outside, its secret nooks and crannies and drawers and chests, it is possible to argue that at certain moments and in certain places, one might build up an intimate relationship with a public structure like an old cinema theatre. Many films reify similar intimacies of place: for instance *Cinema Paradiso* (*Nuovo Cinema Paradiso*, Giuseppe Tornatore, 1988), *Hugo* (Martin Scorsese, 2011) and *The Purple Rose of Cairo* (Woody Allen, 1985). The theatre, it could be said, can become a cultural home of sorts.

When I worked for the Singapore International Film Festival, I spent a lot of time as a volunteer at the Majestic. My duties ranged from merchandise selling, to ticket tearing, to ushering and as a general runner. Sometimes they included reminding the veteran Chinese-speaking projectionist repeatedly that he was not to put the house lights on until the end credits had run their course — he often worried about audiences tripping over themselves in the dark — underscoring the festival’s ethos of “serious” cinema practice, aligning itself with the European arthouse and distinguishing itself from mainstream, “popcorn” cinema. My other informal duties included fielding questions from members of the public, and on more than one occasion having to explain to — or more usually, placate — ticket holders about cancelled or delayed screenings (for example when the Board of Film Censors ratings had not been issued on time), lack of subtitles (the wrong print had been delivered), and any other hiccup in the proceedings. During calmer periods, passers-by from nearby stalls and markets in Chinatown where the theatre was located would sometimes drift in to the lobby, with questions like “Film festival? What’s on?”; or sometimes even “Film festival? What’s that?”

SPECIALE As a festival venue, the Majestic could be said to be a cultural anachronism. Located in Chinatown which, following the state's attempt to clean up its streets according to the ordered principles of modernist rationalisation in the 1960s (through demolitions and repurposing of public spaces), and later in the 1980s to "conserve", at least cosmetically, what was left of the old architecture, by the 1990s Chinatown was a mixed bag of architectural styles, economies (formal and informal), and cultural imaginaries. In a nation with an ethnic Chinese majority, "Chinatown" was "an anachronistic place name"²², but it is this very anachronism that has allowed the space to be inscribed by various notions of "Chineseness" which are continually "reconstituted and transformed to shape state practices and to serve new purposes within the independent State"²³. Yet the modernist rationalisation never fully took hold, pockets of resistance continue to exist, and Chinatown continues to evolve as a "multicoded space inscribed with a multiplicity of meanings"²⁴. The fate of the Majestic could be said to embody many of the contradictory forces within the cultural geography of Chinatown.

The Majestic was built as a Cantonese opera house in 1928 in the heart of Singapore's Chinatown district by the Chinese business tycoon and philanthropist Eu Tong Sen. Designed and constructed by British colonial architectural firm Swan and Maclaren, the theatre combined a mix of Western art deco and traditional Chinese architectural styles. In 1938, it was rented by Shaw Organisation, at the time one of the largest production studios and exhibitors in the region²⁵. When Singapore was occupied by Japan during World War II, Japanese propaganda films were screened at the Majestic²⁶. In 1956, the building was bought by Cathay Organisation, Shaw's rival in film production and exhibition at the time. Cathay ran it as a cinema until 1998 when it was closed and converted into a shopping mall in 2003. The mall itself was unsuccessful and closed in 2007, following which the building was sold on to be turned into a betting centre and then a cash converters, prompting locals to lament its decline²⁷.

By the mid-1990s, the closure of the Majestic was already imminent, and as festival volunteers we were already acutely aware of its anachronistic status within a rapidly expanding exhibition culture of multiplexes, IMAX screens, and sophisticated sound systems, not only in the downtown areas but in the suburban new towns as well²⁸. The Majestic was crumbling, and more than at the edges. It was one of the few theatres left in the hyper-modern nation that housed a single large screen and stall and circle seating. On non-festival days, the lady in the ticket booth still sold tickets printed on soft paper which she marked with a grease pencil — the kind that needed no sharpener as the lead was lengthened by pulling on the attached string and tearing off the encasing paper — when all the multiplexes had already moved to computerised ticketing. The one middle-aged usher employed there met us enthusiastically each year — he never saw crowds as large as ours on normal days. The toilets sometimes leaked. Rats were known to scamper across the feet of unsuspecting patrons during screenings. Kenneth Chan's reading of *Goodbye, Dragon Inn* (*Bu san*, Tsai Ming-Liang, 2003), set in a soon-to-be-closed theatre in Taiwan, resonates with the fate of the Majestic towards the end of its life as a film theatre:

The Fu Ho Theatre represents a pre-video, pre-multiplex cinema, one that often occupies a single building, has a huge screen for Cinemascope movies, and has a large audience sitting capacity. As an instance of these "grand ole dames of yore", the theatre offers a singular cinematic experience, where everyone gathers to enjoy one movie, simply because there is only one giant screen. The singularity of the filmic experience, of course, implies that there is a greater imagined sense of cultural and social connectivity in terms of the movie-going experience, vis-à-vis the diversity and multiplicity of cinematic choices in an era of the DVD and the multiplex²⁹.

Indeed, the large audience capacity and single screen was one of the main reasons why the Majestic was in use during the festival. It was one of the few single hall theatres left in Singapore in the age of the

SPECIALE shopping mall multiplex and its globalised and standardised film product³⁰.

The “singularity of the filmic experience” is one that is increasingly relegated to the past; as Philip Cheah, director and programmer for the festival at the time said, “Audiences are fragmenting”. During the annual festival season, this singular experience was reclaimed for a brief time. Despite its ageing structure, the Majestic frequently played to packed houses during the festival, even hosting Q&A events with filmmakers. People came because it was a “one-off” event, and though there were sometimes complaints about the state of the place, these were infrequent; unusual in a city known for its fastidiousness and obsession with cleanliness, both physical and moral³¹. The rats even became a running joke amongst regulars. Experiencing the festival at the Majestic in the mid-1990s evoked an affective sense of a lost past not just of place but also of time. I borrow from Kenneth Chan’s reading of *Goodbye, Dragon Inn* once again:

Of course, the actuality of the cinematic experience in these theatres is not commensurate with the nostalgic sense that one has, especially when one compares it to the digital-quality sound, pristine picture quality, and comfortable plush seating of the contemporary multiplex halls. While it is true that nostalgia imbues a past experience with a kind of retroactive glow and aura, I want to suggest that it also activates through a memory trace a powerful cultural significance, or “structures of feeling” (...), in an otherwise mundane everyday occurrence. In *Goodbye, Dragon Inn*, the notion of place evokes these memory traces or fragments³².

Watching new festival films in an old cinema like the Majestic brought together the desire for discovery with the nostalgia for an older mode of viewing and thus a different time. This nostalgia must also be taken in the context of a nation that remains on a relentless track of urban renewal, in spite of more recent attempts at “heritage conservation”, continuously building and rebuilding itself, reconfiguring spaces, demolishing landmarks, altering roadways, to the extent that “place identity” for individuals and communities is under severe strain³³.

However, issues of modernisation and nostalgia in Singapore are never just a matter of looking back with rose-tinted glasses or a benign fondness for days gone by. In a territory where the provision of space and place is closely tied up with the authoritarian control of the state, the search (if not the fight) for space — physical, creative and psychic spaces — is always political³⁴. Artists and intellectuals in particular frequently seek out these spaces, while negotiating with state processes and policies of control³⁵. The transmutation of the Majestic into yet another faceless mall in a city of malls and a betting centre with no acknowledgement of its cultural past encapsulates in microcosm the trauma brought on by such cultural violence that accompanies the state’s unending lurch towards modernity. Yet it is a trauma that is largely unvoiced in the public domain; or if voiced, usually to mourn its loss as a *fait accompli*³⁶. This constant change, experienced as a kind of psychic, if not physical, dislocation, may be contextualised within Laurent Berlant’s notion of how to think of the present (in this case and ever-shifting, destabilising present) “as part of an unfolding historic moment [exemplifying] the affective experience not of a break or a traumatic present, but of crisis lived within ordinariness”³⁷.

The Singapore International Film Festival was one of the few spaces through which alternative voices could be heard, though it was not a fully open space. Singapore’s authoritarian, and some would say “draconian”³⁸, state censorship laws have undergone several revisions in the past two decades, and the old “screen; screen-with-cuts; or ban-outright” practice has evolved into a classification system³⁹ although even a restricted rating does not exempt a film from cuts. This included *In the Realm of the Senses (Ai no korida)*, Oshima Nagisa, 1976), in the 2000 edition of the festival, when the censors insisted on cuts to the film even at a time when the R(A) (Restricted Artistic) rating was already in force⁴⁰. However, the censors have also, on occasion, made a number of exceptions for the festival

SPECIALE and allowed it a one-off screening of a film that would be restricted from commercial exhibitors. One example is *East Palace, West Palace (Dong gong xi gong)*, Zhang Yuan, 1996⁴¹, a film noted to be the first from mainland China with explicitly male homosexual themes, and which was itself banned in China and had to be smuggled out of the country to the Cannes film festival. The film played at the 1997 Singapore International Film Festival to a full house at the Majestic Theatre. Another example is Singapore filmmaker, Royston Tan's film, *15* (2003), set amidst "real" youth gangs in Singapore, which was given special permission to be screened uncut at the Singapore International Film Festival in 2003, the film's international premiere, after a delayed deliberation by the Board. Having gained international press attention and festival accolade overseas, the film was later allowed a general release under the R(A) rating only after the filmmaker agreed to make 27 cuts to the film amounting to about five minutes of footage⁴². It would be fair to say, albeit speculatively, that had the film not been shown and been received positively at the Singapore International Film Festival and later abroad, it might not have received a general release in Singapore at all.

In offering rare and hard-won cultural and political spaces to a film like *15*, which exposes the underbelly of a city state keen to maintain its shiny, prosperous exterior, and in a country where foreign imports tend to be valued over homegrown products, the extent of the festival's cultural and political interventions and contributions to a Singapore national cinema and film culture should not be underrated. It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that the "revival" of a Singapore cinema following a period of post-independence decline, emerged in tandem with the birth of the Singapore International Film Festival as an organisation in 1987⁴³.

Festival and city spaces have symbiotic relationships. Festivals utilise spaces within the city and also its infrastructure networks, and cities are keen to use festivals to promote themselves as a destination. As Wong notes: "Film festivals also celebrate place: the city that hosts them, the nation and national/regional industries that often underpin them, and the globalization of relations of production and film markets. Festivals define the very cultural capital that cities and nations embrace as brand-name events for cities of the creative class" [44]. While festival goes encounter the city as a destination for business and leisure, the intensity of the festival experience can also create unexpectedly visceral relationships with the more intimate spaces of the festivals. Films may be screened in multiplexes, old picture palaces, nondescript conference rooms, warehouses, or in outdoor venues, in town squares or even on beaches, or in the case of the Majestic, an old opera house. Each venue will have a story to tell regardless of the film programme, and like the films they host, some stories will be more interesting than others. The story of the Majestic [45] is not the entire story of the festival, nor is it the entire story of Singapore. Nevertheless, the story it does tell serves as a nodal point where trajectories cross and re-cross, operating as an affective space not only of cinema, but also of encounter, history and memory.

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Acknowledgements

No discussion of film festivals and affective spaces can ignore the social relations that contribute to it. My thanks to friends and colleagues of the Singapore International Film Festival at the time, to whom I owe much of my film education and continued interest in the subject: Philip Cheah, Dave Chua, Prisca Gan, Kong Kam Yoke, Lok Meng Chue, Mabelyn Ow, Teo Swee Leng, and many others.

Notes

1. Dina Iordanova, "The Film Festival Circuit", in Dina Iordanova with Ragan Rhyne (ed.) *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit*. St Andrews Film Studies, St. Andrews 2009, pp. 23–39.

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2. Miriam Ross, "The film festival as producer: Latin American Films and Rotterdam's Hubert Bals Fund", *Screen* vol. 52, n. 2 (Summer 2011), pp. 261–67.
 3. Janet Harbord, *Film Cultures*, Sage, London 2002, p. 59.
 4. Harbord, *Film Cultures*, cit., p. 60.
 5. Janet Harbord, "Film Festivals–Time Event", in Dina Iordanova with Ragan Rhyne (ed.), *Film Festival Yearbook 1: The Festival Circuit*, St Andrews Film Studies, St. Andrews 2009, pp. 40–46.
 6. Cindy Hing-Yuk Wong, *Film Festivals: Culture, People, and Power on the Global Screen*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick 2011, p. 5.
 7. Janet Harbord identifies four main discourses underpinning film festivals: first, the discourse of filmmakers and producers; second, the discourse of 'media representation', i.e. the press; third, the 'business discourse' that operates through the buying and selling of films; and fourth, 'the discourse of tourism and the service industry', in *Film Cultures*, cit., p. 60.
 8. See Peter Bart, *Cannes: 50 Years of Sun, Sex and Celluloid*, Miramax, New York 1997; Brian D. Johnson, *Brave Films, Wild Nights: 25 Years of Festival Fever*, Random House, Toronto 2000; Kenneth Turan, *Sundance to Sarajevo: Film Festivals and the World They Made*, University of California Press, Berkeley 2002; Kieron Corless and Chris Darke, *Cannes: Inside the World's Premier Film Festival*, Faber and Faber, London 2007.
 9. A number of initiatives include the *Film Festival Yearbook* series, led by Dina Iordanova, and published by St Andrews Film Studies, and the Film Festival Research Network (FFRN) (founded by Marijke de Valck and Skadi Loist, who also compile a bibliography on <<http://www.filmfestivalresearch.org>>) (Last access 31 July 2014).
 10. Wong, *op. cit.*
 11. Marijke de Valck, *Film Festivals: From European Geopolitics to Global Cinephilia*. Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2007.
 12. Thomas Elsaesser, *European Cinema: Face to Face with Hollywood*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2005 pp. 82–107.
 13. See Mark Peranson, "First you get the power, then you get the money: two models of film festivals", in Richard Porton (ed.), *Dekalog 3: on Film Festivals*, Wallflower, London 2009, pp. 23–37; also Wong, *op. cit.*
 14. Bill Nichols, "Discovering Form, Inferring Meaning: New Cinemas and the Film Festival Circuit", *Film Quarterly* vol. 47, n. 3 (Spring 1994), pp. 16–30.
 15. See Simon O'Sullivan, "The Aesthetics of Affect", *Angelaki* vol. 6 n. 3 (2001), pp. 125–35.
 16. See Catherine Grant, "On 'Affect' and 'Emotion' in Film and Media Studies", *Film Studies for Free* blog (4 November 2011), <<http://filmstudiesforfree.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/on-affect-and-emotion-in-film-and-media.html>>(Last access 31 July 2014).
 17. Ian Breakwell and Paul Hammond (ed.) *Seeing in the Dark: A Compendium of Cinemagoing*. Serpent's Tail, London 1990.
 18. Breakwell and Hammond, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
 19. Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg, "An Inventory of Shimmers", in Gregory J. Seigworth and Melissa Gregg (ed.), *The Affect Theory Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham 2010, pp. 1–25, pp. 1–2.
 20. Mica Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference*, Berg, Oxford 2007, p. 134.
 21. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*. Beacon Press, Boston, MA 1994, p. xxxvi.
 22. Brenda S.A. Yeoh and Lily Kong, "Reading Landscape Meanings: State Constructions and Lived Experiences in Singapore's Chinatown", *Habitat International* vol. 18 n. 4 (1994), pp. 17–35, p. 19. Among Chinese speakers in Singapore, the area is not referred to as *Tangren jie* (street of Tang

- SPECIALE** people) as it normally is in the Chinatowns of Europe or North America. Instead, the area is known in Mandarin Chinese as *Niu Che Shui*, in Hokkien *Gu Chia Cui*, or 'bullock cart water', and in Malay as *Kreta Ayer* ('water cart'), referring to its origins as an area where water was drawn from a well on a nearby hill and taken into town on bullock carts. Note that the place names in the local vernacular make no reference to ethnicity. It was the British colonial government that designated the area an ethnic enclave, 'Chinatown', which the modern nation state has appropriated for its own policies of cultural management (see Yeoh and Kong, *op cit.*).
23. Yeoh and Kong, *op cit.* p. 19
24. Yeoh and Kong, *op cit.* p. 33.
25. See Poshek Fu (ed.) *China Forever: The Shaw Brothers and Diasporic Cinema*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana-Champaign 2008.
26. One wonders if Yasujiro Ozu might have attended any of the screenings when he was sent to Singapore by the Japanese government in 1943. Donald Richie's biography of Ozu notes that Ozu had managed to avoid making any propaganda films for the Imperial Army: 'When Singapore returned to British rule, Ozu busied himself burning negatives and prints. Having done his best to make no films at all, he did not want to be judged a war criminal by the Allied Tribunal' (Donald Richie, *Ozu*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1974, p. 231). It is said that Ozu spent his time in Singapore watching Hollywood films — such as those by John Ford, King Vidor, Alfred Hitchcock, William Wyler, Orson Welles, and others (Richie, *op cit.*, p. 231).
27. Tay Suan Chiang, "Theatre Majestic no more — The Majestic's unfriendly design and unattractive surrounds make it tough to find new uses that fit its cultural heritage", *The Straits Times*, Life! Section (19 November 2011).
28. See Neil Ravenscroft, Steven Chua and Lynda Keng Neo Wee, "Going to the Movies: Cinema Development in Singapore", *Leisure Studies* n. 20 (2011), pp. 215–32.
29. Kenneth Chan, "Goodbye, *Dragon Inn*: Tsai Ming-liang's political aesthetics of nostalgia, place, and lingering", *Journal of Chinese Cinemas* vol.1 n. 2 (2007), pp. 89–103, p. 91.
30. The other was the iconic Capitol Theatre, built in 1903 and located in the metropolitan centre of the city-state, which also closed to the public in 1998. The Capitol was in slightly better shape than the Majestic and was also used by the Singapore International Film Festival in the same period. It is currently being redeveloped into a luxury hotel, retail arcade, residential units, and a re-purposed theatre (see <<http://www.capitolsingapore.com>> (Last access 12 August 2014).
31. See Peter Teo, "'Clean and green – that's the way we like it': a critical study of Singapore's environmental campaigns", Working Paper No. 121 (2002), Centre for Language in Social Life, Lancaster University, Department of Linguistics and Modern English Language. <<http://www.ling.lancs.ac.uk/pubs/clsl/clsl121.pdf>> (Last access 29 October 2014).
32. Chan, *op cit.*, p. 91.
33. Belinda Yuen, "Searching for place identity in Singapore", *Habitat International* n. 29 (2005), pp. 197–214.
34. See Eunice Seng, "Politics of Greening: Spatial Constructions of the Public in Singapore", in William S.W. Lim & Jiat-Hwee Chang (ed.), *Non-West Modernist Past: On Architecture and Modernities*, World Scientific Publishing, Singapore 2012 pp. 143–60.
35. See Lee Weng Choy (ed.) *Space, Spaces and Spacing*. The Substation, Singapore 1996; and Chew Boon Leong, Kong Kam Yoke and Danny Yeo (ed.), *My Creative Room*. My Creative Roo, Singapore 2009. See also <<http://mycreativeroom.wordpress.com>> (Last access 12 August 2014).
36. See for example Clarissa Oon, "The past is just a memory — Heritage issues and conservation causes loomed large in 2011 as Singaporeans reeled from the erosion of personal space", *The Straits Times*, Life! Section (31 December 2011); and Cherian George, *Singapore, the air-conditioned nation*:

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37. Lauren Berlant, “Thinking about feeling historical”, *Emotion, Space and Society* n. 1 (2008), pp. 4–9, p. 5.
38. Tan, Ern Ser, *Does Class Matter? Social Stratification and Orientations in Singapore*. World Scientific Publishing, Singapore 2004.
39. The classification system may be found on the Media Development Authority of Singapore’s website: <http://www.mda.gov.sg/RegulationsAndLicensing/ContentStandardsAndClassification/FilmsAndVideos/Pages/default.aspx> (last accessed 14 August 2014).
40. Richard Phillips, “Film festival director talks to WWS about censorship in Singapore”, *World Socialist Web Site*, 24 April 2000, <<http://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2000/04/sff3-a24.html>> (last accessed 14 August 2014).
41. The film was released in the US as *Behind the Forbidden City*.
42. Sherwin Loh, “15 actor back in school”, *The Straits Times*, Life! Section (14 October 2003).
43. See Raphaël Millet, *Singapore Cinema*, Editions Didier Millet, Singapore 2006; and Jan Uhde and Yvonne Ng Uhde, *Latent Images: Film in Singapore*. Oxford University Press, Singapore 2000.
44. Wong, *op cit.*, p. 2.
45. For an image of the Majestic, please visit the following link: http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_189_2004-12-24.html