



## **HOU HSIAO-HSIEN Retrospectiva in Filmoteca de Catalunya in collaboration with the Asian Film Festival. Barcelona**

With "The Assassin", this director, representing the new wave of Taiwanese cinema, born in mainland China (Meixian, Guangdong, 1947), was for many of his current followers a big discovery, thanks to the Best Director Award that was granted in the edition of the Cannes Festival of 2015. This discovery was related to the background aesthetics that prevails in his filmography, with more than twenty titles, from his beginning, in 1980, when he made his debut feature, until nowadays. This retrospective traces the film-maker's career from "The boys from Fengkuei" (1983), his fourth film, to "The Assassin" (2015). Hou Hisao-Hsien is now carrying out his newest project, and he will not be able to attend the presentation of his retrospective for this reason. In spite of being repeatedly awarded in festivals such as the ones held in Venice and in Cannes, his filmography is far from being known in the West as it would be expected of someone who is the author of films such as "A City of Sadness" (Leone d'Oro, in Venice, 1989), "the Puppetmaster" (Special Jury Prize, in Cannes, 1993) or "The Assassin", already mentioned.

In 1995, the San Sebastian Film Festival dedicated him a retrospective, but since then to date, Hou Hsiao-Hsien has made more than eight titles, few of which have been shown on the screens in Spain. The current retrospective of Filmoteca de Catalunya and Casa Asia will allow the audience to access some of the most outstanding films concerning the poetic that goes through them from beginning to end, as it is perceived in "Flowers of Shanghai" (1998), "Millenium Mambo" (2011), which has been so much compared to "In the Mood for Love" by Wong Kar-Wai, "Café Lumière" (2003), a homage to Yasujiro Ozu, or the three romantic tales of "three Times" (2005), among other titles, fifteen of which are now presented in Filmoteca also forming part of the program of the edition of "Asian Film Festival. Barcelona", 2017.

Long sequence shots together with an unparalleled poetic of time are applied in his cinematographic stories, which go back to the common past as well as to the individual lives of his main characters, whose destiny is usually contextualised in an emotional world that is caught among the 'I', the 'others', and a darker real world represented in the urban nights in Taipei, and the youngsters that plunge in their artificial paradises. However, the same happens when he refers to the underworlds at the end of the nineteenth century in "Flowers of Shanghai", to set an exemple, or in IX century China, where the warrior Nie Yianniang (the assassin), belonging to "The order of assassins", receives her master's command, and kills the man she loves to fulfil her duty.

**Menene Gras Balaguer**