

ASIAN FILMS ARE GO!!! 2003 FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING ASIAN HERITAGE THE SUBWAY WAY

In honor of Asian Pacific Heritage Month, the wacky folks at Subway Cinema offer the *Asian Films Are Go!!! 2003 festival*.

Films from Korea, Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, and India grabbed the spotlight this year. Korea's *Double Agent* (2003) is a potent mix of political intrigue and character study. Han Suk-Kyu (*Shiri*)



Ping Pong

returns to the big screen after a much-lamented three-year break. Playing a North Korean defector who arrives at Checkpoint Charlie after scaling Namsan Mountain, Han shines as a tortured soul who may or not may be a spy for North Korea. What follows is a tour de force performance as well as a sleek film that is reminiscent of thrillers such as *The Third Man* and *The Ipcress File*. Korea can also do horror with the best of them. *The Phone* (2002) bests *The Ring* (the original Japanese version and the American remake) with



Killer Tattoo

its creepy visceral images and a little girl (played by Eun Seo-Woo) who unleashes sick hell on her own family after being possessed (think *The Exorcist's* Linda Blair with an incestuous agenda).

Japan's *Bounce Ko Gals* (1997) is a twisted funhouse of Tokyo's *kogyaru* (schoolgirl hookers) while *Ping Pong* (2002) delves into the kinetic world of



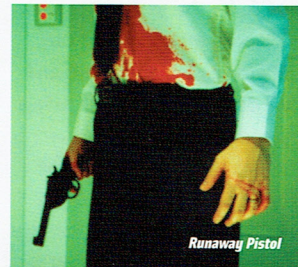
So Close

championship ping pong. This is not simple movie about hitting that little white ball across a wooden table; instead it confronts themes of isolation, jealousy, and bravery in a surreal whirlwind of poetic images. Hong Kong's *So Close* (2002) boasts the hot Shu Qi (*Gorgeous, The Transporter*) as one half of an assassin sisters duo.

Directed by the great Corey Yuen, this is what *Charlie's Angels* should have been, complete with high kicking stunts and sapphic wanderlust. *Killer Tattoo* (2001) from Thailand is a one-of-a-kind detour into the over-the-top world of hitmen and prostitutes.

Never taking itself too seriously, *Tattoo* is pure delight and guilty pleasure rolled up into a smorgasbord of sweaty action and sensuality.

Other films in the festival



Runaway Pistol



Company

include *Company* (2002) from India, Taiwan's *Double Vision* (2002), *Runaway Pistol* (2002), *Just One Look* (2002), and the gory but refreshing zombie flick *Versus* (2000). **ALEX LUU**

PEARL RIVER MART IN SOHO SPREADING THE ASIAN INFLUENCE

New York's trendy SoHo was the site for the Grand Opening of the Asian department store Pearl River Mart this past March.

The star-studded event drew a standing room only crowd that included press, celebrities, casual shoppers, and diehard fans of the store. Prior to this expansion, Pearl River was located in Chinatown. The new store in SoHo boasts two floors and over 20,000 square feet of space that offers traditional clothing, fur-



Julia Stiles at Pearl River's Grand Opening

nishings, kitchenware, from Japan, Korea, India, Thailand, Indonesia, and other Asian countries.

Over the years, the original store, Pearl River Emporium, drew in A-list customers such as Christina Aguilera, and designers Vivienne Tam and Isaac Mizrahi. Co-founded by Ming Yi Chen back in 1978, Pearl River has been the source and home for all products Asian. *Website: PearlRiver.com. AL*