

Podcast Talk: Asian Pop-Up Cinema Honors Hong Kong Pop & Film Legend Teddy Robin Kwan

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CHICAGO – When The Beatles changed pop music forever in the early 1960s, they also launched a worldwide revolution of bands and songwriters. One such star was Teddy Robin Kwan, who founded Teddy Robin & the Playboys in Hong Kong, and rightly took the crown as “The King of Asian Pop.” And for his second act, the small-but-mighty Kwan became one of Hong Kong’s top film composers, as well as a director and actor of note. He was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Asian Pop-Up Cinema series Closing Night Gala in Chicago on May 11th, 2017.

Teddy Robin Kwan was born in South Central China, and formed the band “Teddy Robin & the Playboys” in the mid 1960s. Using influences like The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Ventures and The Shadows, Kwan and his group shot up the Hong Kong and Asian Pop Charts with each new hit, including a English language version album called “Not All Lies,” with Kwan singing his songs in that crossover phrasing.



Asian Pop-Up Gala, LtoR: Steve Barclay (Director, Hong Kong Trade Office), Sophia Wong Bocchio (Founder, Asian Pop-Up Cinema), Teddy Robin Kwan (Honoree) and Rich Moskal (Director, Chicago Film Office)

Photo credit: AsianPopUpCinema.org

At the peak of his fame in the 1970s, Kwan took a break by living in Canada, and then came back to score some of the most popular films in Hong Kong cinema history. His prolific output as a pop star served him as a film composer, and he has scored over 20 films in that career. While doing that, he was also directing (“All the Wrong Spies,” “The Legend of Wisely” and “Shanghai Shanghai”) and acting (“All the Wrong Clues,” “Cageman” and “Gallants”) As a producer, he was involved in the Hong Kong cult film “Cops and Robbers” (1979), and the theme song he composed for that film became a cultural standard.

Teddy Robin Kwan was given the first Lifetime Achievement Award by the Asian Pop-Up Cinema series – founded by Chicago film program

veteran Sophia Wong Boccio. The festival, which just completed its fourth season, is a revolving showcase of diverse Asian films, with China, Hong Kong, Inner Mongolia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Tibet and Vietnam all represented in the just finished season, in films with English subtitles. Screenings occur at the AMC River East 21 in downtown Chicago, the Wilmette Theatre in Wilmette, Illinois, and various locations (including free screenings).



Back in the Day: Teddy Robin Kwan (seated) & the Playboys
Photo credit: File Photo

Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com got the honor of speaking with the legendary Teddy Robin Kwan, who still radiates the style and passion of a veteran music star. In the following podcast interview, Kwan talks about his origins, his composing techniques and his influences.

For more general information on the Asian Pop-Up Cinema series [click here](#). [15] To listen to the 1960s stylings of Teddy Robin & the Playboys, [click here](#). [16] For the latest music video featuring Teddy Robin Kwan, [click here](#). [17]



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By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [19]
Writer, Editorial Coordinator
HollywoodChicago.com
pat@hollywoodchicago.com [18]

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