



C.A.C.A. Greater San Gabriel Valley Lodge The Piazza (Special) – September 2018

Debut of “Crazy Rich Asians”, a Hollywood-produced Film with an all-Asian Cast and Director, and GSGV Lodge’s Participation in Free Preview

The beginning of the month of August brings great excitement to the movie-going crowd, especially among the Asian American communities. That is because of the premiere of the Hollywood-produced movie “Crazy Rich Asians” on August 15 in theaters all around the country. The excitement is tremendous because this movie has an all-Asian cast and director, and the script is based on an international best-selling book of the same name authored by an Asian American and published in 2013.

Sister Lisa Yang, a GSGV Lodge member and a representative of the AARP Chinatown Chapter, informed us of the AARP Movies for Grownups program that offered free screening of the movie on Aug. 8 in AMC theaters in Monterey Park. Many of our Lodge members were there to enjoy the movie: Lisa Yang, John and Sharon Wong, Shirley Hwong, Bill Hwa, Mary Wong, Nena Calica, Lily Kam, Jessica Mei with O.C. Lee (LA), and former MP mayor Lily Chen.

“Crazy Rich Asians” is the first Hollywood film in a long while (25 years to be exact) to have an all-Asian cast and director telling a contemporary story that centers entirely on Asian American and Asian characters, all of whom are in one way or another ethnically Chinese. This is by no means a narrative of how Chinese have suffered from poverty, discrimination, and ravages of the Pacific War, and somehow got reprieved under the protective umbrella of the “West”, as often depicted in previous American-made films involving Asians. It is about Asians who have finally come to their own in the advent of the third millennium, becoming successful and rich either through old money, good education and/or very hard work. What stand out throughout the film are the verbal admonitions from the hero’s mother, who is Singaporean, and the heroine, who is Chinese American, on the irreconcilable difference between American individualism and Chinese family-centric traditions. The opulent display of wealth of these “crazy rich Asians” and their indulgent lifestyles provide a sort of entertaining comic relief.

On the whole, the movie proves to be great entertainment and should be a box office success. “It was fun, and I enjoyed very much.” said Shirley Hwong, “I am very proud more Asian actors and actresses are taking charge at Hollywood. I look forward to more good movies played by Asian stars in the future.”

Actress Lisa Lu Plays Special Role!

So finally, the making of “Crazy Rich Asians” and its premiere made history of epic proportions in Hollywood moviemaking. You will have to look back twenty-five years to find “Joy Luck Club”, another Hollywood film that had a cast of almost all-Asian actors and actresses, save for a Caucasian actor portraying a husband.

What is amazing, though, is that veteran actress Lisa Lu appeared in both films. “She played Auntie Mai Mai in



At >90, Lisa Lu still looks wonderful today.

‘Joy Luck Club’, an important role,” said Shirley Hwong, who was Lisa Lu’s real-life daughter-in-law and still maintains a close relationship with her. In “Crazy Rich Asians”, Lisa Lu plays the hero’s Amah, i.e., Grandma. Shirley recalled that when she was very young, she quit

school to help run Lisa Lu’s family restaurant business with her son. “Family always comes first!” says Shirley. Ironically, in a scene in “Crazy Rich Asians”, the hero’s Mom told the heroine that she had to give up her college studies to raise a family for the hero’s Dad—family first again. This reminds one vividly of how strongly Chinese families in Southeast Asia cling to their old traditions passed down several generations, even more so than in other parts of East Asia and America..



Shirley Hwong & Lisa Lu

Preparations for Election of Next Year’s Officers

Now is that time of the year to begin the process of nominating candidates for next year’s Board Officers. For present Board members and for those who are not officers yet, if you are interested, please send a message to Brother John Wong, Nominations Chair, to express your interest to run and for which position.

Welcome on board, Pete!! The entire Board of Officers welcomes the transfer of Pete Chinn to our Lodge. Pete has been a long-time C.A.C.A. LA Lodge member, an accountant by profession and recently moves to Monterey Park.