

For immediate release

HKIFF INDUSTRY UNVEILS PROJECT MARKET WINNERS, ANIMATION TAKES CENTRE STAGE



13 March 2024 (Hong Kong) – The first HKIFF Industry Project Market concluded today by awarding 21 cash and in-kind prizes worth over US\$223,000 to outstanding projects of diverse interests and genres. The big winners are two animation projects which received three awards, underscoring the growing impact and appeal of the art form in the film industry.

The Project Market this year incorporates the 22nd Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF22) and the inaugural HKIFF Industry - CAA China Genre Initiative (HCG). Over the course of three days, it presented 47 projects shortlisted from more than 460 submissions representing 48 countries and regions. The event facilitated a record number of over 1,150 private business meetings, engaging filmmakers with industry professionals and potential investors.

The Excreman – On the Road by McDull creator and veteran animator Brian Tse won the IDP Award for Hong Kong projects. ***Heirloom*** by Upamanyu Bhattacharyya, an Indian animation feature also selected for the HAF Goes to Cannes program, won the WIP Award as a non-Hong Kong project. Both projects demonstrate lively reimaginings of local tales and a strong connection to their domestic social landscapes.

The inaugural HCG Awards were presented to two outstanding genre projects: ***Call of Lobster*** by Yin Chen-Hao and ***Dying Fire*** by Gao Linyang, for their compelling narratives and bold use of dramatic elements. The objective of the HCG, according to Mary Gu, CEO of CAA China, is to provide the next generation of filmmakers in the region with a network of support to help them launch their careers, both locally and in the international marketplace.

According to Dr Wilfred Wong, Chairman of the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society, the HKIFF Industry Project Market has provided a more robust platform for filmmakers to showcase their innovative projects and establish connections with industry players by bringing HAF and HCG under one umbrella.

"It marks a new chapter of our ongoing industry initiatives," Dr Wong stated. "We are thrilled with the response from the film community, and the exceptional quality of this year's projects fills me with hope and optimism for their future success."

Dr Wong congratulated all the winners and participants of the HKIFF Industry Project Market while acknowledging the generous support from an expanding list of sponsors, including CAA China, Aim Media, Project D, La Fonte, and INBETWEEN this year.

A complete list of HKIFF Industry Project Market award winners is as follows: -

- HCG Award: ***Call of Lobster*** by **Yin Chen-Hao** (Li Fei will provide mentorship)
- HCG Award: ***Dying Fire*** by **Gao Linyang** (Zhou Yunhai will provide mentorship)
- IDP Award for a Hong Kong project: ***The Excreman – On the Road*** (Hong Kong) by **Brian Tse**
- IDP Award for a non-Hong Kong project: ***Blonde*** (Japan) by **Sakashita Yuichiro**
- WIP Award for a Hong Kong project: ***Montages of a Modern Motherhood*** (Hong Kong) by **Oliver Chan Siu-kuen**
- WIP Award for a non-Hong Kong project: ***Heirloom*** (India) by **Upamanyu Bhattacharyya**
- CCG Grand Award: ***The Way We Talk*** (Hong Kong) by **Adam Wong Sau-ping**
- AimMedia Award: ***The Land is Our Navel*** (Mainland China) by **Zhang Zhongchen**
- TAICCA Award: ***Encore*** (USA, Hong Kong) by **Stefanos Tai**
- Taipei Film Commission Award: ***A Ghost in the Market*** (Taiwan) by **Chin Chia-Hua**

- Project D Award: *The Sichuan Culinary Chronicles: In Four Chapters* (Mainland China, Hong Kong) by **Qiu Jiongjiong**
- La Fonte X INBETWEEN Award: *Staring at Your Back* (South Korea, Japan, Taiwan) by **Jang Kun-Jae**
- White Light Post Post-Production Award for an IDP project: *Nagi Notes* (Japan, France) by **Fukada Koji**
- White Light Post Post-Production Award for a WIP project: *To Kill a Mongolian Horse* (Mainland China) by **Jiang Xiaoxuan**
- Network of Asian Fantastic Films (NAFF) Award: *The Vampire of Sheung Shui* (Hong Kong) by **Shreyom Ghosh**
- Udine Focus Asia Award: *White Flowers and Fruits* (Japan) by **Sakamoto Yukari**
- HAF Goes to Cannes Program:
 - Admission* (Mainland China) by **Quentin Hsu Kun-Hua**
 - Heirloom* (India) by **Upamanyu Bhattacharyya**
 - Intimate Encounter* (Taiwan) by **Chang Tso-Chi**
 - The Land is Our Navel* (Mainland China) by **Zhang Zhongchen**
 - Montages of a Modern Motherhood* (Hong Kong) by **Oliver Chan Siu-kuen**

Please refer to the **Appendix** for details of the awards and the HKIFF Project Market winning projects.

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For full details on all shortlisted HKIFF Industry Project Market projects, please visit <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk/haf/introduction>

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About HKIFF Industry Project Market

The HKIFF Industry Project Market was launched in 2024 and incorporates the well-established Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) and the newly introduced HKIFF Industry - CAA China Genre Initiative (HCG) initiative. This integration upholds HAF's objective of establishing an ecosystem to support filmmakers with projects in progress, particularly for co-production ventures. In its first edition, the HKIFF Industry Project Market showcased 35 HAF projects in development, ten HAF works-in-progress, and six HCG projects. The HKIFF Industry Project Market is being held concurrently with the Hong Kong FILMART, Asia's largest film market, regularly attracting over 8,000 industry professionals.

About Hong Kong International Film Festival Industry Office (HKIFF Industry)

To enhance the promotion and support of film industry development, the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society restructured its industry services in 2021, which led to the establishment of the Hong Kong International Film Festival Industry Office (HKIFF Industry). The HKIFF Industry provides comprehensive services and global opportunities for independent filmmakers. Through the HKIFF Industry, filmmakers can avail themselves of various services designed to enhance their projects and increase their appeal, including the HAF Film Lab, which helps refine projects for more significant impact. Additionally, filmmakers can access post-production assistance through the HKIFF Industry Project Market. Furthermore, the HKIFF Industry facilitates exposure of projects on major international platforms through the HAF Goes to Cannes initiative. Finally, the HKIFF Collection assists filmmakers in planning the trajectory of their completed films. These services collectively serve as windows to the world for independent filmmakers, opening avenues for recognition and success.

About The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited (HKIFFS)

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited (HKIFFS) is a charitable, non-profit, and non-governmental organisation committed to exploring and promoting creativity in film art and culture. It is responsible for organising the renowned Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and the Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF). Another notable event organised by the society is the Cine Fan Summer International Film Festival (Summer IFF), which takes place annually in August. In 2013, HKIFF introduced the HKIFF Cine Fan Programme, a repertory programme aimed at enriching and deepening the cinematic experience of Hong Kong moviegoers. This monthly programme showcases contemporary, retrospective, and thematic films, offering diverse cinematic delights. In 2021, the HKIFFS underwent a restructuring of its film industry services and established the HKIFF Industry to promote and support the development of the non-mainstream film industry. The HKIFF

Industry achieves this through initiatives such as co-production ventures, festival strategies, and overseas distribution efforts, all facilitated by the HKIFF Collection. The HKIFFS continues to play a vital role in nurturing creativity and fostering the growth of the film industry, both locally and internationally.

Official website: www.hkiff.org.hk

Appendix: HKIFF Industry Project Market Award Winners

1 **HCG Award – US\$20,000 (cash)**

CAA China presents this award to support two projects by assigning mentors to provide customised guidance for development.

Winner: ***Call of Lobster***

Directed by: Yin Chen-Hao

Produced by: Jin Pai-Lunn, Cheng Wei-Hao

Winner: ***Dying Fire***

Directed by: Gao Linyang

Produced by: Guan Hu

2 **IDP Award for a Hong Kong project – HK\$100,000 (cash)**

Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund, and HAF jointly present this award to a non-Hong Kong project for its originality and creativity.

Winner: ***The Excreman – On the Road*** (Hong Kong)

Directed by: Brian Tse

Produced by: Mr. Brian Tse, Mr. Samuel Choy

3 **IDP Award for a non-Hong Kong project – HK\$100,000 (cash)**

Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund, and HAF jointly present this award to a non-Hong Kong project for its originality and creativity.

Winner: ***Blonde*** (Japan)

Directed by: Sakashita Yuichiro

Produced by: Fukase Kazumi

4 **WIP Award for a Hong Kong project – HK\$100,000 (cash)**

Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund, and HAF jointly present this award to a Hong Kong project for its originality and creativity.

Winner: ***The Excreman – On the Road*** (Hong Kong)

Directed by: Oliver Chan Siu-kuen

Produced by: Oliver Chan Siu-kuen, Lung Kwok-yiu

5 **WIP Award for a non-Hong Kong project – HK\$100,000 (cash)**

Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund, and HAF jointly present this award to a non-Hong Kong project for its originality and creativity.

Winner: ***Heirloom*** (India)
Directed by: Upamanyu Bhattacharyya
Produced by: Arya A Menon, Shubham Karna

6 CCG Grand Award – HK\$200,000 (cash)

Chinachem Group presents this award to a Hong Kong project for its most potential.

Winner: ***The Way We Talk*** (Hong Kong)
Directed by: Adam Wong Sau-ping
Produced by: Jacqueline Liu, Ho Hong

7 AimMedia Award – HK\$100,000 (cash)

AimMedia Pictures presents this award to support and encourage a high-quality project.

Winner: ***The Land is Our Navel*** (Mainland China)
Directed by: Zhang Zhongchen
Produced by: Midi Z, Chen Kunyang, Xie Haochi

8 TAICCA Award – US\$10,000 (cash)

Taiwan Creative Content Agency (TAICCA) presents this award to encourage and support creative content in Asia by giving it to a project with the most potential to work/co-produce with creative talents or enterprises in Taiwan.

Winner: ***Encore*** (USA, Hong Kong)
Directed by: Stefanos Tai
Produced by: Jonathan Hsu

9 Taipei Film Commission Award – HK\$30,000 (cash)

The Taipei Culture Foundation - Taipei Film Commission presents this award to encourage and support a project with the most potential to film and co-produce with creative talents or enterprises in Taipei.

Winner: ***A Ghost in the Market*** (Taiwan)
Directed by: Chin Chia-Hua
Produced by: Eva Wang

10 **Project D Award – HK\$200,000 (in-kind)**

DZOFILM presents this award in collaboration with RED, Aputure, OCHW, and PPB to support young filmmakers, leveraging the industry's influence to assist in image creation.

Winner: *The Sichuan Culinary Chronicles: In Four Chapters*
(Mainland China, Hong Kong)

Directed by: Qiu Jiongjiong

Produced by: Ding Ningyuan, Zhao Jin, Zhao Jia

11 **La Fonte x INBETWEEN Award – US\$20,000 (in-kind)**

La Fonte and INBETWEEN jointly present this award to support innovative Asian filmmakers by offering creative services to improve their projects' recognisability.

Winner: *Staring at Your Back* (South Korea, Japan, Taiwan)

Directed by: Jang Kun-Jae

Produced by: Youn Hee-Young, Imai Taro, Joyce Chou Chia-Yi

12 **White Light Post-Production Award for an IDP project – US\$15,000 (in-kind)**

White Light Studio presents this award to promote cinematic innovation and promising Asian directors by offering post-production services.

Winner: *Nagi Notes* (Japan, France)

Directed by: Fukada Koji

Produced by: Osanai Terutaro

13 **White Light Post-Production Award for a WIP project – US\$15,000 (in-kind)**

White Light Studio presents this award to promote cinematic innovation and promising Asian directors by offering post-production services.

Winner: *To Kill a Mongolian Horse* (Mainland China)

Directed by: Jiang Xiaoxuan

Produced by: Tan Chui Mui, Mo Zhulin

14 **Network of Asian Fantastic Films (NAFF) Award (in-kind)**

Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival presents this award, allowing a project to participate in NAFF 2024.

Winner: ***The Vampire of Sheung Shui*** (Hong Kong)
Directed by: Shreyom Ghosh
Produced by: Peter Yam, Michael J. Werner, Shreyom Ghosh

15 **Udine Focus Asia Award (in-kind)**

Udine Far East Film Festival (FEFF) presents this award to encourage and facilitate co-production between Asia and Europe. FEFF will invite the winning project and its representative to participate in Focus Asia 2024.

Winner: ***White Flowers and Fruits*** (Japan)
Directed by: Sakamoto Yukari
Produced by: Yamamoto Teruhisa

16 **HAF Goes To Cannes Program (in-kind)**

HAF and Marché du Film, Festival de Cannes, present this award by offering market screening opportunities to filmmakers seeking sales agents, distributors, and festival exposure at the Cannes Film Festival 2024.

Winner: ***Admission*** (Mainland China)
Directed by: Quentin Hsu Kun-Hua
Produced by: Hsu-Hsiao-Ming, Ruby Chen, Lin Chi-An

Winner: ***Heirloom*** (India)
Directed by: Upamanyu Bhattacharyya
Produced by: Arya A Menon, Shubham Karna

Winner: ***Intimate Encounter*** (Taiwan)
Directed by: Chang Tso-Chi
Produced by: Kao Wen-Horng

Winner: ***The Land is Our Navel*** (Mainland China)
Directed by: Zhang Zhongchen
Produced by: Midi Z, Chen Kunyang, Xie Haochi

Winner: ***Montages of a Modern Motherhood*** (Hong Kong)
Directed by: Oliver Chan Siu-kuen
Produced by: Oliver Chan Siu-kuen, Lung Kwok-yiu