

For Immediate Release

**HAF TO OFFER 24 PRIZES WITH CNC, RED SEA, AND SKYFILM
AMONG NEW AWARD SPONSORS**



Hong Kong, 5 March 2025 - The 23rd edition of the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF23) introduces six new awards, bringing the total number of cash and in-kind prizes across 20 categories to 24, with a value exceeding US\$250,000.

The new award sponsors are CNC from France, the Red Sea Film Foundation from Saudi Arabia, Pica Pica Media from Hong Kong, and Maxtimes, SkyFilm, and Aputure from mainland China.

Organised by the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS), HAF23 is an integral part of the HKIFF Industry Project Market. This year, it will take place from 17 to 19 March at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, alongside the 29th Hong Kong Film & TV Market (FILMART). The awards will be presented at a ceremony on 19 March.

The diverse awards range from financial support for development and post-production gap financing to in-kind equipment, filming, and post-production service support. A remarkable selection of 25 in-development projects (IDPs), 15 works-in-progress (WIPs), and six projects from the new animation section will compete for these prizes.

Three of the six new awards are specifically tailored for in-development projects:

- **HAF x CNC Award** (cash prize, EUR 10,000) presented by the Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC). "The CNC has been supporting Asian filmmakers for many years, consistently recognising the talent of these creators and their aspiration for freedom of expression," said Jérémie Kessler, Director of European and International Affairs. "At HAF,

you can meet these filmmakers who celebrate bold and ambitious cinema. Creating a cash award as part of HAF symbolises a community of values.”

- **Maxtimes Pictures Award** (cash prize, HK\$100,000) presented by Beijing-based Maxtimes, known for its strong track record in discovering young filmmaking talent and developing projects from an early stage. Its notable works include *B for Busy*, *Gold or Shit*, and *Her Story*.
- **The Aputure Award** (in-kind prize, HK\$300,000) is presented by Shenzhen-based Aputure, an industry leader in cinematic lighting. Its clients include Hollywood blockbusters like *Dune: Part Two* and *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, as well as record-breaking hits in Hong Kong, such as *The Last Dance* and *A Guilty Conscience*.

The inaugural HAF animation section introduces a new award from SkyFilm:

- **SkyFilm Animation Award** (cash prize, HK\$100,000) presented by Beijing-based SkyFilm, renowned for the 2015 3D animation feature film *Monkey King: Hero Is Back*, a breakout success that marked a new milestone in China’s animated film industry. “Through our collaboration with HAF, we aim to take animation filmmakers further afield, drive the continuous growth and development of the animation industry, and create more works that resonate with global audiences,” said producer Zhang Huiting.

The remaining two new awards are open to all HAF projects across the IDP and WIP sections:

- **Red Sea Fund Award** (two cash prizes with a combined value of US\$15,000) presented by Red Sea Fund, awarded to one IDP and one WIP. The non-profit Red Sea Film Foundation runs industry programmes year-round, including the Red Sea Fund, Red Sea Labs and Red Sea Souk. The calendar culminates in the Red Sea International Film Festival, which brings global cinema to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. “By offering awards for in-development projects and works-in-progress, we continue our commitment to fostering emerging and established talent from the Arab world, Africa, and Asia, bringing compelling and distinctive stories to the global stage,” said Emad Eskander, Head of Fund.
- **Pica Pica Post-Production Award** (in-kind prize, US\$30,000) presented by Hong Kong-based Pica Pica Media, a provider of post-production services. Its portfolio includes previous HAF projects such as *Port of Call*, *The Sunnyside of the Street* and *Montages of a Modern Motherhood*.

Other updates:

- Talent agency CAA China continues its support for Chinese-language genre films through an in-kind **HCG Award** that includes professional script consulting support. Renowned screenwriters Sun Yue, known for works like *Hidden Man* and *Cry of the Birds*, and Zhi Yaqing, behind *The Rescue*, will guide the winning project.
- **Taipei Film Commission**, a long-standing HAF sponsor, has increased the value of its award to HK\$50,000 to support film projects that could be filmed and co-produced with Taipei talents and enterprises.
- The **La Fonte Award** now includes a cash prize of HK\$30,000 and offers branding services to innovative and socially conscious Asian filmmakers.

Please refer to the <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk/en/haf/awards/year> for a complete list of awards and sponsors.

AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY

Date: 19 March 2025 (Wednesday)

Time: 16:30 - 18:00 (Hong Kong Time)

Venue: Starlight Theatre, Hall 1

Admission: Holders of HKIFF Industry Project Market badges, FILMART visitors, members of media and press

-Ends-

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HKIFF Industry Project Market

Inaugurated in 2024, the HKIFF Industry Project Market incorporates the long-running Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF), the biennial HKIFF Industry - CAA China Genre Initiative (HCG), and the new Animation section added in 2025.

The new setup continues HAF's mission to create a supportive ecosystem for filmmakers with working projects for co-production ventures. Attracting more than 1,000 filmmakers and financiers from at least 35 countries and regions, around 25 in-development projects (IDP), 15 work-in-progress projects (WIP) and five animation projects are selected annually to participate in the three-day event. The HKIFF Industry Project Market occurs during FILMART, Asia's largest film market, with over 8,000 professionals in attendance.

Official website: <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk>

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited (HKIFFS) is a charitable, non-profit and non-governmental organisation dedicated to discovering and promoting creativity in film art and culture. It organises the annual Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF). Another highlight is the Cine Fan Summer International Film Festival, held every August. In 2013, HKIFF introduced the repertory HKIFF Cine Fan Programme to enrich and deepen Hong Kong moviegoers' experience through a monthly programme of contemporary, retrospective, and thematic showcases. In 2021, HKIFFS restructured its film industry services and set up HKIFF Industry to promote and support non-mainstream film industry development through co-production, festival strategies, and overseas distribution (HKIFF Collection).

Official website: www.hkiff.org.hk