

The 20th Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) Brief Report

The 20th **Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum** (HAF) was held over three days from 14 to 16 March in conjunction with Filmart Online. The event was staged online the third year due to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The forum was organised by the **Hong Kong International Film Festival Society** (HKIFFS), coorganised by the **Hong Kong Trade Development Council** (HKTDC), and financially supported by **Create Hong Kong** (CreateHK) and **Film Development Fund** (FDF). Held concurrently with **Hong Kong International Film and TV Market** (FILMART) for the fifteenth time, HAF was once again one of the core events of Entertainment Expo Hong Kong.

HAF is widely recognised as one of the most significant film-financing platforms in Asia. Over the three-day period, HAF attracted leading film financers, producers, distributors and buyers, connecting them with talented filmmakers through business meetings and seminar, pitching and networking events for potential co-production opportunities.

1. Shortlisted Projects and Filmmakers

This year, HAF has received 222 submissions in the HAF Project section, among which 28 fictional projects from 13 countries and regions, including China, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and USA.

On the other hand, the Work-in-Progress (WIP) initiative, which enters its sixth edition in 2022, is designed to provide a platform for later-stage projects seeking completion funding, post-production partners, distributors and sales agents, film festival supports, and other industry services. This year WIP line-up has 15 fiction film projects selected from 84 submissions that have completed or nearly completed shooting or production.

2. International Partners (in alphabetical order):

- 1. **Asian Project Market** (APM), Busan International Film Festival (South Korea)
- 2. **CineMart**, International Film Festival Rotterdam (The Netherlands)
- 3. Festival Scope, Moving Scope SAS (France)
- 4. **Focus Asia**, Far East Film Festival (Italy)
- 5. **Film Bazaar**, National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) (India)
- 6. FIRST International Film Festival (China)
- 7. **Golden Horse Film Project Promotion** (FPP), Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival (Taiwan)
- 8. Marché du Film (France)
- 9. **Network of Asian Fantastic Films** (NAFF), Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (South Korea)

- 10. SIFF Project, Shanghai International Film Festival (China)
- 11. Taipei Film Commission (Taiwan)

3. Concurrent Events and Advisory:

Concurrent Events:

- Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF)
- HKIFF Cine Fan
- Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART)

Advisory:

The 20th HAF's advisory is comprised of esteemed industry professionals, including:

- 9 International Advisors
- 1 Honorary Legal Advisor
- 4 Project Reading Committee Members

4. Industry participation:

Online business meetings were arranged for 28 selected In-development (IDP) Projects and 15 selected Work-in-progress (WIP) Projects. Participating HAF guests included film financiers, film producers, film buyers and distributors, film festival delegates, representatives of film funds and film commissions, production companies and post-production houses.

HONG KONG

 Asian Shadows, Broadway Cinematheque, Chinese Shadows, Golden Scene Company Limited, Good Move Media, Hong Kong Asian Film Festival, Irresistible Films, Just Creative Studio Limited, Mar Vivo Films, Medialink Entertainment Limited, mm2 Entertainment Hong Kong Limited, PCCW Media Group, Petra Films Pte. Ltd., Sixty Percent Productions, Sony Pictures Entertainment, The Walt Disney Company (Hong Kong) Limited and We Pictures Limited.

CHINA

Aim Media Pictures, Bad Rabbit Pictures, Beijing Hugoeast Media Co., Ltd., Bona Film Group, Dax Pictures, Dongchun Films, Emei Film Group, Factory Gate Films, FIRST International Film Festival, iQIYI, Inc., JiangSu OMNIJOI Movie Co., Ltd., La Fonte, Lantern Film, Meridian Entertainment, Midnight Blur Films, More Joy Entertainment, Perfect World Pictures, QC Media, Rediance, Shanghai Film Comrades, Shanghai International Film Festival | SIFF Project, Undertow Film, United Entertainment Partners and Wuzhou Film Distribution Co.

TAIWAN

 CTBC Venture Capital, Flash Forward Entertainment, Joint Entertainment International Inc., Machi Xcelsior Studios, Million Star Entertainment Inc., Modern Cinema, Perfect Sound Co., Ltd., Select Entertainment Co., Ltd., Taipei Film Commission, Taipei Film Festival, Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival | Film Project Promotion, Taiwan Creative Content Agency and Volos Films Limited.

JAPAN

Himeji Film Commission, Tokyo International Film Festival and UNIJAPAN.

SOUTH KOREA

 Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival | Network of Asian Fantastic Films, Busan International Film Festival | Asian Project Market, Hanmac Culture Group, Hive Filmworks Inc. and Seoul Film Commission.

OCEANIA & SOUTHEAST ASIA

CathayPlay International Pte. Ltd. (Singapore), Darpan Global (Singapore), Diversion (Thailand), mm2 entertainment Pte. Ltd. (Singapore), National Film Development Corp. Ltd. (India), New Zealand Film Commission (New Zealand), Paperheart (Malaysia), Passionate World Sdn. Bhd. (Malaysia), Singapore International Film Festival (Singapore), V Movies & Media Sdn. Bhd. (Malaysia), White Light Studio (Thailand) and WME Independent (Singapore).

FRANCE

 Alpha Violet, C & Co, Cannes Directors' Fortnight, Dissidenz Films, Haut et Court, Haut Les Mains Productions, Les Contes Modernes, Memento International, Playtime, Reel Suspects and WIDE.

UNITED KINGDOM

 Celsius Entertainment, Film Republic Limited, Plaza Mayor Company Limited and REASON8 Films.

EUROPE (OTHERS)

ANT!DOTE Sales (Russia), Berlin International Film Festival (Germany), Berlinale Co-Production Market (Germany), Berlinale European Film Market (Germany), Berlinale Forum (Germany), Berlinale World Cinema Fund (Germany), DOK Leipzig - International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film (Germany), Fortissimo Films (The Netherlands), Giornate degli Autori - Venice Days (Italy), International Film Festival Rotterdam (The Netherlands), Intramovies (Italy), Lights On (Italy), Picture Tree International (Germany), San

Sebastian International Film Festival (Spain), Slovak Film Institute (The Slovak Republic), Ties That Bind (Italy), Udine Far East Film Festival | Focus Asia Project Market (Italy), Venice International Film Festival (Italy) and Wouter Barendrecht Film Foundation (The Netherlands).

CANADA

Silver Sword International and Toronto International Film Festival.

UNITED STATES

 Cheng Cheng Films, Chicago International Film Festival, Cinema Inutile, Kindred Spirit, NBCUniversal, OneTwoThree Media, SK Global Entertainment, Sundance Film Festival and UCLA Boethius Initiative.

OTHERS

Ruth Films (Israel).

5. Project Accomplishments:

HAF alumni have gone on to enjoy both box office success and critical acclaim at major film festivals around the world with their completed projects, effectively realising the opportunities offered by the forum.

Scala (WIP 2021) by **Ananta THITANAT** (Thailand) was shortlisted for the Berlin International Film Festival Forum 2022.



To Love Again (WIP 2021) by **GAO Linyang** (China) won special Jury Award and FIPRESCI Award, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2022



Out of This World (originally titled Sometimes It's Like Going Back to Childhood) (WIP 2021) by CHEN Guan (China) was shortlisted for Opening Film of Venice Days, Venice Film Festival 2021.



Zalava (WIP 2021) by **Arsalan AMIRI** (Iran) won FIPRESCI Award, Best Film from Orizzonti and Parallel Sections, and Grand Prize of Venice International Film Critics' Week, Venice Film Festival 2021.



White Building (WIP 2020) by **Kavich NEANG** (Cambodia, France, Mainland China, Qatar) won Best Actor in Orizzonti section, Venice Film Festival 2021.



A New Old Play (WIP 2020) by **QIU Jiongjiong** (Hong Kong, France) won Special Jury Prize, Locarno Film Festival 2021.



Drifting (WIP 2020) by **Jun LI** (Hong Kong) won Best Adapted Screenplay and got 12 nominations at Taipei Golden Horse Awards 2021, and was shortlisted for Big Screen Competition, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021.



6. Event Highlights

Over the three-day period, HAF organized online business meetings, open pitch sessions, a virtual party and award ceremony to connect global industry professionals with talented filmmakers, encouraging collaboration across borders and facilitating financial support for the Asian cinema.

A) Project Meetings

Date: 14 - 16 March 2022

HAF Online Platform

HAF arranged online business meetings over the three-day period to connect filmmakers with global investors, distributors and buyers to explore co-production opportunities.







B) Virtual WIP Open Pitch

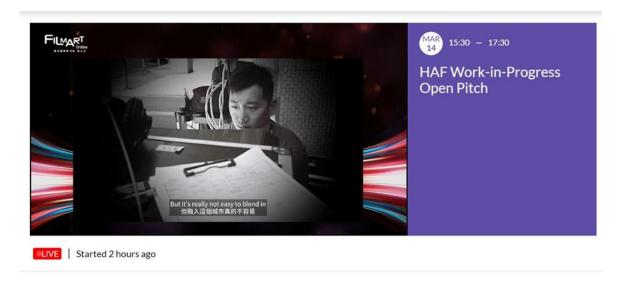
Date: 14 March 2022 Time: 3:30pm – 5:30pm

Website: www.hktdc.com/hkfilmart



This year marked the 6th edition of "Work-in-Progress" Open Pitch. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, the format of open pitch this year remained online with pre-recorded video footages in Chinese and English subtitles. Shortlisted 15 fictional projects were invited to join the open pitch on 14 March, 2022. The aim of the open pitch is to promote the selected film projects and

connect the talented filmmakers with professionals and investors, post-production companies, distribution agents and film festival programmers. The target audiences were the film industry professionals attending FILMART and HAF. 822 audience views were recorded where most of them came from Hong Kong, Mainland China, Taiwan, Canada and Indonesia. Private meetings with the attendees were also arranged.



HAF Work-in-Progress Open Pitch, is designed to provide a platform for laterstage projects seeking completion funding, post-production partners, distributors and sales agents, film festival supports, and other industry services. This year, 15 feature fiction projects are shortlisted for WIP, including works by Stanley Kwan, Winnie Tsang, Wong Lina, Matan Yair, Yang Heng, etc.

The 15 shortlisted fictional feature projects were Matan YAIR 's *A Room of His Own*, Syed Maisam Ali SHAH's *In Retreat*, Rajesh S. JALA's *The Spark*, GENG Zihan's *A Song Sung Blue* and CAI Jie's *Borrowed Time*, WU Weifeng's *Drop Your Cat*, CHEN Yusha's *Frankenfish by the River*, YANG Heng's *Silent Ghosts*, QIAO Sixue's *The Cord of Life*, WANG Di's *The Vessel Isle*, WANG Xide's *Vagrant Bebop*, WONG Lina's *Village* • "Senet", Liam FANG's *Water Can Go Anywhere*. LAU Kok Rui's *The Sunny Side of the Street* and LEE Yi-Fang's *Little Blue*.

LIVE Now - HAF Work-in-Progress Open Pitch









C) HAF Goes to Cannes

HAF partnered with Marché du Film the sixth time and presented the program "HAF Goes to Cannes" at Marché du Film of Festival de Cannes in May this year. Five WIP projects including *A Room of His Room*, *Silent Ghosts*, *The Spark*, *The Sunny Side of the Street*, and *The Vessel's Isle* were selected.



D) Operation Greenlight

Date: 15 March 2022 (Tuesday)

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 noon (Hong Kong Time)

Website: http://www.hktdc.com/hkfilmart

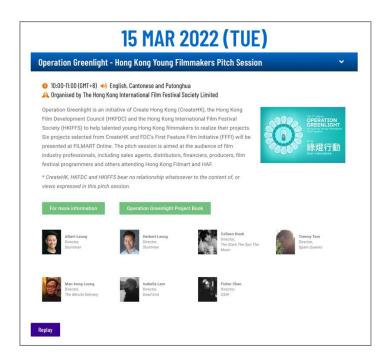
Attendees: 258 guests (from 15 to 17 March 2022)

Operation Greenlight, organised by the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS) for Create Hong Kong (CreateHK) and the Hong Kong Film Development Council (HKFDC), featured a bespoke open pitching session to connect Hong Kong young filmmakers with industry professionals and potential investors.

Six projects selected from CreateHK and FDC's most recent edition of the First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI) were presented at FILMART Online, the virtual edition of the 26th Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART), during a specially tailored pitch session on 15 March, 2022. Film industry mentors had provided guidance and advice to the filmmakers in the preparation of their presentations. After the first run of the session, Operation Greenlight remained accessible online to FILMART and HAF guests until 17 May.

A total of 258 film industry professionals attended Operation Greenlight Pitch Session. The overall top five viewing countries and regions of the session were Hong Kong (56.2%), Mainland China (13.1%), Canada (10.5%), Singapore (3.9%) and Japan (3.3%).

The six film projects included Albert LEUNG's and Herbert LEUNG's *Stuntman*, Colleen KWOK's *The Stars The Sun The Moon*, Tommy TOM's *Spare Queens*, LOONG Man-hong's *The Minute Delivery*, Isabella LAM's *Dead End*, and Fisher CHAN's *OSH!*.



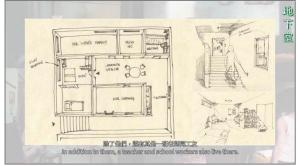




























HAF organized a virtual party through the online platform Gather Town for filmmakers and guests. We re-built the scenes of Hall 1 of Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre and rooftop area with Victoria Harbour. This provided an opportunity for them to network and meet with one another in a novel and casual setting outside their online meeting rooms.

Date: 14 March 2022 (Monday)

Time: 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm (Hong Kong Time)

Link: https://app.gather.town/app/lb8hMOIALXxbXeRw/HAF20%20Filmmakers%20Party

Attendees: approx. 60 guests

Invitations









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HAF20 Filmmakers' Party HAF20 電影人網上派對

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Step 2: You will receive a one time use 6-digit authentication code in your email after signing in. 第二郎:総入佐約野福地世都琴写ign in with email之後,生的野福病寺収到一次往使用的 6 位無税担隔。



Step 3: Check your personal email inbox and find the one-time password, 로그를 : 대해조하였다. 설립 - 숙선활교통 •

Your one-time password is:

If this was not you, please ignore this email.

If you're having trouble with the login, you can contact support at support @eather town

Thanks, The Cother Team

Step 4: Enter your code. 無同步:能入您收到的發檀碼:



Step 5: Name your avatar. Please use your real name at the party so that others can easily identify you. 第五方:沿水名子・沿水名使用素質技名・以力素素を口花温泉・



Step 6: Connect your camera and microphone. Join the Party Now 美六岁:打型隔途顶和安克里,器型Join the Gathering即写过人家会。



Attendees' Interactions and Activities

• Filmmakers and guests conversed as naturally as in their real life.



• Guests enjoyed private conversations in private zones.



 Guests watched teasers / director showreels and viewed the project information at each project's booth.



Virtual Group Photos





E) HAF Awards Ceremony

A new award presented by the Taipei Film Commission and the return of the Wouter Barendrecht Award were among the 14 cash and in-kind prizes which were handed out at the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum's 20th anniversary edition (HAF20). The 14 cash and in-kind awards were announced online on 16 March.

Date: 16 March 2022 (Wednesday)

Time: 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm (Hong Kong Time)

Venue: The Wave & FILMART Online Attendees: 236 unique VOD viewers

The 20^h HAF Award List





HAF Fiction Award (Hong Kong Project)

The Stars The Sun The Moon by Colleen Kwok Tung-Shuen



HAF Fiction Award (Non - Hong Kong Project)

Not Found (Mainland China) by Huang Ningwei



WIP Award

Silent Ghosts (Hong Kong) by Yang Heng



Taipei Film Commission Award

I Might Write About Us (Hong Kong/Taiwan) by Jun Li



Wouter Barendrecht Award

Don't Cry, Butterfly (Vietnam) by Duong Dieu Linh





Network of Asian Fantastic Films (NAFF) Award

The Cursed Land (Thailand) by Panu Aree and Kong Rithdee



Udine Focus Asia Award

Don't Cry, Butterfly (Vietnam) by Duong Dieu Linh



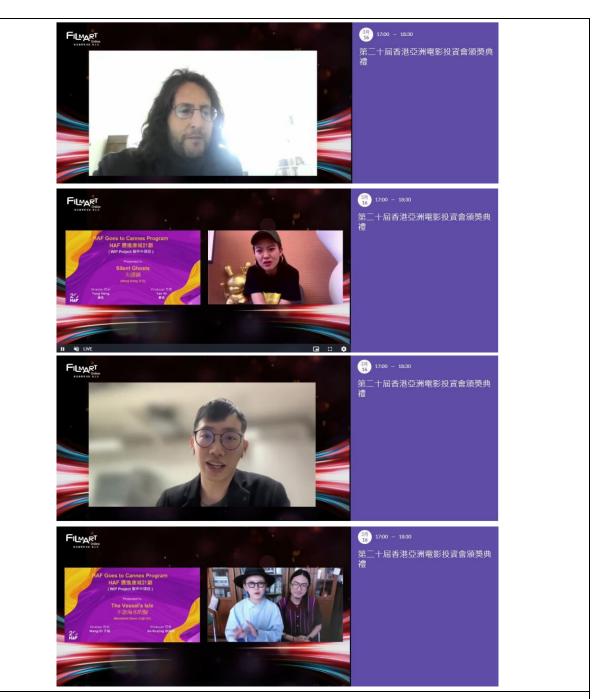
White Light Post Post-Production Award for an IDP project

Cubs (Indonesia) by Riri Riza



White Light Post Post-Production Award for a WIP project

A Room of His Own (Israel/Italy) by Matan Yair



HAF Goes to Cannes Program

A Room of His Own (Israel/Italy) by Matan Yair
Silent Ghosts (Hong Kong) by Yang Heng
The Spark (India) by Rajesh S. Jala
The Sunny Side of the Street (Hong Kong) by Lau Kok Rui
The Vessel's Isle (Mainland China) by Wang Di

7. HAF Statistics

Projects

222 In-development (IDP) project submissions and 84 Work-in-progress (WIP) project submissions were received from around the world. 28 IDP projects and 15 WIP projects were selected to attend HAF Online during 14 - 16 March 2022.

Financiers and Appointments

The participating guests included film financiers, film producers, film buyers and distributors, film festival delegates, representatives of film funds and film commissions, production companies and post-production houses. Throughout the three days of the online HAF, 951 meetings were arranged for 43 selected projects.