

**For Immediate Release**

**THIRTEEN ANIMATION AND GENRE PROJECTS  
COMPLETE HAF24 LINEUP**



**Hong Kong, 11 February 2026** – The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS) today finalises the lineup for the 24th edition of the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF24) with the last 13 projects, joining 29 previously announced In-Development and Work-in-Progress projects.

Comprising seven animations and six genre projects, these works are at various phases of development and production. All 42 projects will be showcased at this year's HKIFF Industry Project Market, taking place from 17 to 19 March at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, alongside the 30<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART).

Three of the projects announced today are either in production or post-production, including two animations: *The Excreman - On the Road* (Brian Tse) and *Zsazsa Zaturannah* (Avid Liongoren), as well as the suspense thriller *What My Bones Know* (Qin Yuqi). They will be presented at the WIP Open Pitch (details below) alongside the 12 previously announced Works-in-Progress.

Projects from the dedicated animation section, first introduced last year, have quickly gained international recognition. Both Xu Zao's *Light Pillar*, set to premiere at Berlinale's Perspectives this month, and Toe Yuen's *A Mighty Adventure*, winner of the Golden Horse Award for Best Sound Effects last November, emerged from the section's inaugural edition.

Also comprising works at various stages of development, the six shortlisted genre projects showcase a wide range of captivating drama and suspense, from Turkish mining towns to the vast steppes of Mongolia, covering psychological thrillers to body horror.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ANIMATION PROJECTS:**

***The Excreman – On the Road*** by Brian Tse (creator of the McDull franchise) is a story about a colossal poo, who defeats the plumber sent to cleanse the poo community from the sewer before assuming the latter's identity to start a new human life.

***Fish Ball*** from Jhun Yong-Duk (co-director of *The Tiger's Apprentice*) tells the story of a ruthless general reborn as a sardine who, to atone for his past life, employs military strategies to lead his fish army against predators in a tactical underwater epic.

***Rainy Dreams***, by Alireza Ghasemi (winner of the Sundance World Cinema Dramatic Competition's Directing Award for *In the Land of Brothers* in 2024), is a hybrid of animation and live-action footage that follows six displaced children in Calais as they confront their fears and pursue their hopes through nightly dreams.

Produced by Lu Xiaowei (*Light Pillar*, 2026 Berlinale Perspectives) and marking Chen Xudong's feature debut, ***Roxanne*** is a stop-motion monster film set in a post-apocalyptic ocean, following a boy born at sea in search of humanity's last hope.

***Sentinel*** from Carl Josep E. Papa (*The Missing*, winner of Asia Pacific Screen Awards' Best Animated Film in 2024) is a multi-POV drama centred on a transfer student, an editor-in-chief, and a school principal, who clash when an article in a campus newspaper reveals violence in the school's military training programme.

Producer Isabelle Glachant reunites with director Lei Lei (*Silver Bird and Rainbow Fish*, Rotterdam's Tiger Competition, 2022) on ***Tooth and Tales***, a fairy tale about a boy who embarks on a journey to find the story that can heal his toothache.

***Zsazsa Zaturannah*** by Avid Liongoren (*Hayop Ka!*, 2020 Annecy competition) centres on a shy gay hairdresser who is compelled to confront enormous challenges to fight zombies and aliens after swallowing a space rock that transforms him into a flamboyant female superhero.

#### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE GENRE PROJECTS:**

Produced by Leste Chen and directed by Zhou Jinghao (*Girl on Edge*, 2025 Cannes Directors' Fortnight), the suspense drama ***In the Name of Right*** follows a long-serving maintenance worker who chooses to do the right thing by helping his struggling employee, only to trigger a fatal accident that spirals out of control.

Crime thriller ***The Power Plant*** by Tayfun Pirselimoglu (*Kerr*, Turkey's Academy Awards submission in 2023) follows the dangerous liaison between a married meatball vendor and an excavator operator, while mutilated murders baffle the police in their snow-covered mining town.

***Searchers: Blood in the Grass***, from Park Kiyong (*Gangwondo*, 2021), is an action drama that follows a Korean apple farmer who must form an uneasy alliance with his reluctant Mongolian father-in-law to rescue his pregnant wife from a powerful political dynasty involved in international fentanyl trafficking.

Set in 11<sup>th</sup>-century Singapore, the mythological body horror ***Strange Root (Keinginan)***, by Lam Li Shuen (co-director of *Born of the Yam*, 2026 Berlinale Forum Expanded), features a demi-god born from a yam, which is driven towards a violent and erotic confrontation after being cast aside, as villagers fixate on a shipwrecked beast.

Supernatural horror film ***The Veil***, the feature debut of Gabriel Motta (short film *The Veil*, 2025 Toronto), explores the violence hidden within faith and family through a religious cult founded on fake possession rituals, which descends into darkness when a vengeful entity genuinely possesses the pastor's daughter.

Set in a freezing, dying mining town, Qin Yuqi's feature debut, *What My Bones Know*, is a dark tale of survival and fate, entangling a college graduate, a terminally ill miner, and a runaway accountant, who are all drawn to a local tavern following the discovery of a severed ear.

## WIP OPEN PITCH

Date: 17 March 2026 (Tue)

Time: 13:20 – 16:00 (Hong Kong Time)

Venue: Starlight Theatre, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

All shortlisted WIP projects will participate in the pitch session at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre on 17 March 2026. Each WIP team will have the opportunity to take centre stage and present their projects, including a 10-minute first look introduction, to a key industry audience seeking original content.

We invite distributors, producers, investors, festival programmers, and representatives of funding organisations with an HKIFF Industry Project Market or FILMART accreditation to participate.

## GUEST AND MEDIA ACCREDITATION

Investors, festival organisers, industry professionals, and media can now register at <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk/guest-media-registration>. Once accredited, all guests will be able to request one-on-one meetings with filmmakers starting tomorrow via the appointment system. Media representatives will have access to all official events.

To stay updated on the latest news and details about the HKIFF Industry Project Market, please visit

<https://industry.hkiff.org.hk> (our official website)

<https://www.facebook.com/hkiffindustry> (our Facebook page)

<https://www.instagram.com/hkiffindustry> (our Instagram page)

-End-

## For media enquiry, please contact:

### VT Comms

Alice Au Yeung

Tel: (+852) 2787 0706

(+852) 9887 9387

Email: [hkiffindustrymedia@vtcomms.com](mailto:hkiffindustrymedia@vtcomms.com)

### HKIFF Industry

Lizzie Zhang

Tel: (+852) 2102 7359

(+852) 5545 3639

Email: [lizzie\\_zhang@hkiff.org.hk](mailto:lizzie_zhang@hkiff.org.hk)

### **About HKIFF Industry Project Market:**

The HKIFF Industry Project Market serves as the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society's flagship industry platform. It aims to support filmmakers by facilitating project funding, co-production collaborations, and networking opportunities, advancing outstanding cinematic projects from development to the international stage.

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's 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 (SummerIFF) 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 restructures its film industry services and set up HKIFF Industry to promote and support non-mainstream film industry development through co-production and festival strategies and overseas distribution (HKIFF Collection).

Website: [www.hkiff.org.hk](http://www.hkiff.org.hk)

**Appendix: Full list of the 24th HAF-Animation Projects**

\* First narrative feature projects

^ Previous HAF IDP projects

A1. ***Fish Ball***, South Korea

Director: Jhun Yong-Duk

Producers: Rhee Han-Dae, Chen Xiayan

Production Company: CocoaVision & AIOI Studios

A2. ***Rainy Dreams***, France, Iran

Director: Alireza Ghasemi

Producers: Mojean Aria, Reza Baastani, Constance Le Scouarnec

Production Company: Mystic Makers

A3. \****Roxanne***, Mainland China

Director: Chen Xudong

Producers: Lu Xiaowei, Chen Xiaoran

Production Company: Fengduan Pictures (Shanghai) Co., Ltd.

A4. ***Sentinel***, The Philippines

Director: Carl Joseph E. Papa

Producer: Geo Lomuntad

Production Company: Super!

A5. ***Tooth and Tales***, Mainland China, Hong Kong

Director: Lei Lei

Producers: Isabelle Glachant, Pi San

Production Company: Chinese Shadows

A6. ^***The Excreman – On the Road***, Hong Kong

Director: Brian Tse

Producers: Brian Tse, Samuel Choy

Production Company: On The Road Studio Limited

A7. ^***Zsazsa Zaturannah***, The Philippines, France

Director: Avid Liongoren

Producers: Avid Liongoren, Franck Priot

Production Companies: Rocketsheep, Ghosts City Films

**Appendix: Full list of the 24th HAF-Genre Projects**

\* First narrative feature projects

G1. ***In the Name of Right***, Mainland China

Director: Zhou Jinghao

Producers: Leste Chen, Emma Duan, Wang Yang

Production Company: Guliguo Pictures Limited

G2. ***The Power Plant***, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria

Director: Tayfun Pirselimoglu

Producers: Vildan Ersen, Radu Stancu, Vanya Rainova

Production Company: Gataki Films

G3. ***Searchers: Blood in the Grass***, Mongolia, South Korea

Director: Park Kiyong

Producers: Park Kiyong, Nomuunzul Turmunkh

Production Company: Hulegu Pictures LLC

G4. ***Strange Root (Keinginán)***, Singapore, Indonesia, Germany, The Netherlands

Director: Lam Li Shuen

Producers: Tan Bee Thiam, Looi Wan Ping, Mark Chua

Production Company: 13 Little Pictures

G5. ***\*The Veil***, Brazil

Director: Gabriel Motta

Producer: Aletéia Selonk

Production Company: Okna Produções

G6. ***\*What My Bones Know***, Mainland China

Director: Qin Yuqi

Producer: Cui Zidong

Production Companies: Eternal Growth Stream Film