

For immediate release

HAF UNVEILS 15 WORK-IN-PROGRESS PROJECTS



Hong Kong, 8 February 2022 – The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum today completes the line-up for its 20th anniversary edition (HAF20) with the announcement of 15 projects shortlisted for the Work-in-Progress (WIP) section, including nine debut features and works by **Stanley KWAN**, **Winnie TSANG**, **WONG Lina**, **Matan YAIR**, and **YANG Heng**.

HAF20, which already announced 28 In-development projects last month, will run online from 14 to 16 March in conjunction with the 26th Hong Kong International Film & TV Market (FILMART).

There were 84 WIP submissions from 23 countries and regions this year. Commenting on the selections, which have become an increasingly significant part of HAF since their introduction in 2017, **HKIFF Industry Director Jacob WONG** said he was particularly pleased to present ***BORROWED TIME*** and ***The Sunny Side of the Street***.

“They are the first projects to have progressed through the HAF eco-system, from Film Lab to In-development projects, and now onto WIP,” WONG said. “We set out to provide coordinated support across various stages of independent filmmaking, covering every aspect from early-stage project development, financing to post-production and promotion. It is very satisfying to witness some of these projects coming through.”

BORROWED TIME and **The Sunny Side of the Street** both won script consultation service awards at HAF Film Lab in 2019. They participated in HAF's In-development projects section the following year and are currently in post-production.

BORROWED TIME, which **Stanley KWAN** produces for first-time Chinese director **CAI Jie**, is about a daughter who sets out from Guangzhou to Hong Kong to look for her long-missing father, played by **Tai Bo** (*Suk Suk*). In **The Sunny Side of the Street**, **Anthony WONG** (*Still Human*) plays a taxi driver who forms an unusual father-son relationship with a Hong Kong-born Pakistani child refugee. **Winnie TSANG** produces for Hong Kong-based Malaysian filmmaker **LAU Kok Rui**, making his directorial debut.

Other WIP highlights include **Silent Ghosts** by **YANG Heng** (*Ghost in the Mountains*, Berlinale Panorama 2017), in which a tourist follows a mysterious woman to a small town where he encounters men with different memories of her. The recipient of an excellent screenplay award and production funding from Taiwan's Ministry of Culture, **LEE Yi-Fang's** debut feature **Little Blue** is an intimate portrayal of female erotic desire.

Bad Rabbit Pictures, the Beijing-based production company founded by cinematographer **CAO Yu** and actress-producer **YAO Chen**, has two projects on the shortlist. **WONG Lina**, whose *A First Farewell* won the Firebird Award winner of HKIFF's first-ever Chinese-language Young Cinema competition in 2019, returns with **Village • "Senet"**, a poetic musical about a boy from a remote village in Xinjiang's Taklamakan Desert. **QIAO Sixue's** debut feature, **The Cord of Life**, explores the notion of hometown through a nomadic electronic musician who brings his Alzheimer-stricken mother back to the Mongolian grassland for her last days.

While Chinese-language projects dominate the field, this year's WIP line-up still features an Israel-Italy co-production. **A Room of Its Own** by **Matan YAIR** (*Scaffolding*, Best Film at Jerusalem Film Festival 2017) is about a 17-year-old teenager searching for his path in the world when his mother moves into his room after his father has moved out of the house. Also making the shortlist are two projects from India: documentarian **Rajesh S. JALA's** first narrative feature, **The Spark**, is about a victim of violence who creates havoc in the ancient city of Banaras. He is joined by first-time director **Syed Maisam Ali SHAH**, whose **In Retreat** follows a marginalised character who returns home in a dream-like journey.

WIP Open Pitch (Hong Kong Time)

Date: 14 March 2022

Time: 15:30 – 17:30

All accredited FILMART and **HAF guests** are welcome to attend the online WIP Open Pitch through this link: www.hktdc.com/hkfilmart. Please refer to **Appendix** for details on all shortlisted WIP projects.

WIP began in 2017 as a dedicated platform for later-stage projects seeking completion funding, post-production partners, distributors and sales agents, and film festival support, extending the services of the main HAF programme, which is for projects in the pre-production or development stages.

WIP projects have performed remarkably in film festivals internationally. As recent as Venice in 2021, **Arsalan AMIRI's *Zalava*** won the International Film Critics' Week grand prize, with **Kavich NEANG's *White Building*** winning the Orizzonti Best Actor award. **GAO Linyang's *To Love Again*** and **LEI Lei's** animated ***Silver Bird And Rainbow Fish*** both competed in Rotterdam's Tiger Competition this year, with ***To Love Again*** winning the Special Jury and FIPRESCI awards. **Ananta THITANAT's** documentary ***Scala*** will premiere at Berlinale Forum.

Guest Accreditation for HAF

Guest registration for HAF20 is now open to investors, festival programmers and other industry professionals through <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk/guest-registration>. Accredited guests will receive a complimentary code for registration and schedule one-on-one online meetings with HAF filmmakers to discuss their projects.

For more up-to-date information about HAF, please visit our official website at <https://industry.hkiff.org.hk> or our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/hkiffindustry/>.

To download information:

<https://usercontent.hkiff.org.hk/Press/@HAF20>

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About Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF)

The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) is Asia's premier film financing platform. HAF brings Asian filmmakers with upcoming film projects to Hong Kong for co-production ventures with top film financiers, producers, bankers, funding bodies, sales agents, distributors, and buyers. Around 30 in-development projects (IDP) and ten work-in-progress projects (WIP) are selected annually to participate in the three-day event attended by more than 1,000 filmmakers and financiers from over 35 countries and regions. HAF has the added advantage of being held in conjunction with Hong Kong FILMART, Asia's largest film market, annually attracting over 8,000 industry attendees.

HAF enhances the prospects of the participating projects through close collaborations with international organisations such as iQIYI (Mainland China), Fox International Productions (Greater China), Cinemart (the Netherlands), Asian Project Market (South Korea), Golden Horse Film Project Promotion (Taiwan), MIA (Italy) and more. It also gives out cash and in-kind awards to the value of around US\$250,000 with support from Create Hong Kong and Film Development Fund, among others.

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

Hong Kong International Film Festival Society set up an Industry Office (HKIFF Industry) in 2021 to promote and support industry development more effectively. By helping filmmakers to polish their projects for a better appeal (HAF Film Lab), match-making them with investors and finding post-production assistance (Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum), giving their projects exposure in international platforms (HAF Goes to Cannes), and advising them on distribution and festival-placement matters (HKIFF Collection), HKIFF Industry targets to offer independent filmmakers more comprehensive services and windows to the world.

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 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 restructured 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).

Official website: www.hkiff.org.hk

Appendix: Full list of the HAF20 work-in-progress (WIP) projects

* First feature projects

^ HAF Film Lab 2019

A.	A Room of His Own	Israel 以色列 Italy 意大利
Director 導演 :		Matan YAIR
Producer 監製 :		Maya FISCHER
Production Company 製作公司 :		Green Productions
B.	* A Song Sung Blue 小白船	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演 :		GENG Zihan 耿子涵
Producer 監製 :		LIANG Jing 梁靜, Jane ZHENG 鄭菁
Production Company 製作公司 :		The Seventh Art Pictures Co., Ltd. 北京七印象文化傳媒有限公司
C.	*^ BORROWED TIME 人海同遊	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演 :		CAI Jie 蔡杰
Producer 監製 :		Stanley KWAN 關錦鵬, MO Jinjin 莫津津
Production Company 製作公司 :		Bocut Film Production 廣州薄殼文化傳媒有限公司
D.	* Drop Your Cat 扔你的貓	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演 :		WU Weifeng 吳蔚峰
Producer 監製 :		QIAN Yini 錢藝妮
Production Company 製作公司 :		Sparks Production 火花 (上海) 影業有限公司
E.	* Frankenfish by the River 我們在河畔希望被魚怪吃掉	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演 :		CHEN Yusha 陳語沙
Producer 監製 :		Yuz HAN 韓柚子, Annie SONG 宋曉佳
Production Company 製作公司 :		Yiti Film Productions Co., Ltd. 一啼影視文化傳播有限公司
F.	* In Retreat	India 印度
Director 導演 :		Syed Maisam Ali SHAH
Producer 監製 :		Syed Maisam Ali SHAH, Abhishek KHEROTIA
Production Company 製作公司 :		Varsha Productions

G.	* Little Blue 小藍	Taiwan 台灣
Director 導演：	LEE Yi-Fang 李怡芳	
Producer 監製：	LIN Shih-Ken 林仕肯	
Production Company 製作公司：	G-Spot Entertainment Co., Ltd. 奇葩娛樂事業有限公司	
H.	Silent Ghosts 失語鎮	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演：	YANG Heng 楊恒	
Producer 監製：	YAN Ni 晏妮	
Production Company 製作公司：	No Chopsticks Pictures Limited 香港沒筷子電影有限公司	
I.	* ^The Cord of Life 臍帶	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演：	QIAO Sixue 喬思雪	
Producer 監製：	CAO Yu 曹郁, YAO Chen 姚晨, LIU Hui 劉輝	
Production Company 製作公司：	Bad Rabbit Pictures Limited 壞兔子（上海）影業有限公司	
J.	The Spark	India 印度
Director 導演：	Rajesh S. JALA	
Producer 監製：	Rajesh S. JALA, Prayas DEEPTI	
Production Company 製作公司：	The Elements, Inquilab Studio	
K.	* ^ The Sunny Side of the Street 白日青春	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演：	LAU Kok Rui 劉國瑞	
Producer 監製：	Vinod SEKHAR, Winnie TSANG 曾麗芬, Soi CHEANG 鄭保瑞, Peter YAM 任硯聰	
Production Company 製作公司：	70 Plus Production Company Limited 七十志映像有限公司	
L.	* The Vessel's Isle 不游海水的鯨	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演：	WANG Di 汪迪	
Producer 監製：	XU Ruijing 徐瑞婧	
Production Company 製作公司：	Twelve Oaks Film Art (Shenzhen) Co., Ltd. 十二橡樹影業（深圳）有限公司	

M.	Vagrant Bebop 半個小夜曲	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演：		WANG Xide 王曦德
Producer 監製：		LI "Siniang" Yang 四娘, ZHAO Jin 趙晉
Production Company 製作公司：		Beijing Gilgamey Culture Communication Co., Ltd. 北京吉爾伽美文化傳播有限公司, Midnight Blur Films 午夜失焦（杭州）文化傳播有限公司
N.	Village • "Senet" 村莊 音樂	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演：		WONG Lina 王麗娜
Producer 監製：		LIU Hui 劉輝
Production Company 製作公司：		Haloxyton Ammondendron Pictures 梭梭樹（上海）影業有限公司 Bad Rabbit Pictures Limited 壞兔子（上海）影業有限公司
O.	Water Can Go Anywhere 去看大海	Mainland China 中國內地
Director 導演：		Liam FANG 方亮
Producer 監製：		HUANG Xufeng 黃旭峰
Production Company 製作公司：		Factory Gate Films 工廠大門影業